PARADIGM REGAINED:

THE HUTCHINSONIAN RECONSTRUCTION OF

TRINITARIAN PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

(1724-1806)

THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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I certify that I have read this thesis and found that it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

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ABSTRACT

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THE HUTCHINSONIAN RECONSTRUCTION OF TRINITARIAN PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY
(1724-1806)

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Recently, there has been a considerable attempt by historians of eighteenth-century intellectual history to present the religious and conservative side of the Enlightenment thought. Hutchinsonianism, as an eighteenth-century orthodox movement, provides an example of the argument that the Enlightenment was a battlefield of fideistic and rationalistic forces. This dissertation aims to explain how and why a movement such as Hutchinsonianism came into being, changed and eventually died. Hutchinsonians crusaded their way into the eighteenth-century intellectual arena with their relentless war against heterodoxy. The Hutchinsonian system had many branches and all of them had their foundations in the idea of the Christian Trinity: for example, a trinitarian cosmology designed as an alternative to Newtonian cosmology and natural religion, a certain Hebrew linguistic method to highlight the trinitarian promise in the Old Testament. The attempt made by the

Hutchinsonians can be seen as one to redefine orthodox Protestant identity, by making use of a re-assessment of Enlightenment epistemology, an almost cabbalistic method of dealing with the Old Testament text, and the reinstatement of the authority of the Book in a proper Protestant fashion.

A survey of Hutchinsonianism over the eighteenth century provides answers to questions about the demise of the movement as well as its genesis. An examination of the different generation of followers exhibits the reasons for change in the movement over time. Hutchinsonians later in the century were more and more willing to dispense with or play down parts of the system for various reasons. It will be argued here that, firstly, they lost the battles they were engaged in some fronts like Hebrew studies; secondly, some of their reactionary attitudes became redundant, such as anti-Newtonianism, and thirdly, there developed a reluctance to embrace Hutchinson and his whole system, in order to be able to concentrate more on being relevant to the general cause of orthodoxy. The question of the movement's demise is presented in association with the increasing conservatism of the late eighteenth century, in response to the revolutionary ideas fed by abroad: France and America. It will be argued that the willingness to try to ameliorate the public profile of Hutchinson's system led itself to the movement's submergence within a wider orthodoxy.

Keywords: Hutchinsonianism, Trinitarian, Cosmology, Hebrew, eighteenth-century, Orthodox.

ÖZET

KAZANILMIŞ PARADİGMA
TESLİS TİPİ HRİSTİYANLIĞIN HUTCHINSONCILAR TARAFINDAN YENİDEN YAPILANDIRILMASI
(1724-1806)

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Son zamanlarda, onsekizinci yűzyıl dűşűnce tarihi uzmanları arasında Aydınlanma dűşűncesinin dini ve tutucu tarafını ortaya çıkarma konusunda gőzle gőrűlűr bir çaba gőzlenmektedir. Hutchinsonculuk, onsekizinci yűzyılda ortaya çıkan ortodoks bir akım olarak, Aydınlanma dűşűncesinin fideist ve rasyonel gűçlerin savaş alanı oldugu fikrine bir őrnek oluşturur. Bu tez, Hutchinsonculuk dűşűncesinin nasıl ve neden ortaya çıktığını, zaman içindeki değişimini ve dűşűşűnű açıklamayı amaçlamıştır. Hutchinsoncular onsekizinci yűzyıl entellektüel ortamına heterodoks çevrelere açtıkları savaş ile girdiler. Hutchinsonianism birçok dala sahipti ve bunların hepsinin temelinde Hristiyan Teslisi yatar. Bu dallara őrnek verilecek olursa; Teslis tipi kozmoloji, Newtoncu kozmoloji ve doğal dine alternatif olarak hazırlanmıştı. İbraniceye dayanan dilbilimsel meal metodu ise Eski Ahit'teki Teslis unsurunu ortaya koymaya yőnelikti.

Hutchinsoncılar tarafından gősterilen çaba ortodoks Protestan kimliği yeniden yorumlamaya yőnelikti. Bu amaç doğrultusunda kullandıkları

metodlar şunlardı: Aydınlanma dűşűncesi epistemolojisinin yeniden ele alınması, Kabalayı cağrıştıran bir tűr Eski Ahit meali, ve Protestanlığa uygun olarak kutsal kitabın otoritesini yeniden kurma çabasıdır.

Hutchinsonculuğun onsekizinci yűzyıl boyunca ele alınması bize bu dűşűnce akımının doğuşu kadar dűşűşű konusundaki soruları cevaplamamızda yardımcı olur. Bu akımın farklı nesillerindeki takipçilerinin karşılaştırılması zaman içerisinde beliren değişmeleri ortaya çıkarır. Yűzyılın sonlarına doğru, Hutchinsoncular sistemin ana kollarından vazgeçmeye başlamışlardır. Bu tezde tartışılan ilk sebep, entellektuel tartışmalardaki başarısızlıklarıdır. Buna őrnek olarak İbranice çalışmaları verilmiştir. Ikinci olarak, bazı tepkisel tavırların azalmasıdır. Buna őrnek olarak, giderek kaybolan karşı-Newtonculuk verilmiştir. Űçűncű olarak, Hutchinson'un kendisini ve dűşűnce sistemini sahiplenme konusunda giderek artan bir gőnűlsűzlűk kendini gőstermiştir. Buna sebep, Hutchinson'un takipçilerinin genel ortodoks amaçlara konstantre olmayı tercih etmeleridir. Bu akımın yok olma problemi, onsekizinci yűzyılda Fransa ve Amerika tarafından beslenen devrimci fikirlere giderek artan bir tepki olarak tutucu politikalarla birlikte ele alınmıştır. Bu tezde tartışılan, Hutchinson'un sisteminin profilini yumuşatmaya yőnelik istek ve çabaların bu son dőnemde yerini bu akımın geniş ortodoks çevrelerle birleşmesine bırakmasıdır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Hutchinsonculuk, Teslisci, Kosmoloji, İbranice, onsekizinci yűzyıl, ortodoks.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

Journals

SPCK:…… ……Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

ELH……Eighteenth Century Literary History.

PT:…… ……Political Theory.

JHI:……Journal of the History of Ideas.

DNB:……Dictionary of National Biography.

PMLA:……Proceedings of Modern Language Association.

Manuscripts Collections

Annotated Catalogue:……...……...An Annoted Catalogue of the Works of Alexander Stopford Catcott LLB and of his Sons, Bristol Reference Library, Ref. no. 28011.

NLS: ……National Library of Scotland.

BL: ……British Library.

Multivolume works

Works……Julius Bate and Robert Spearman (eds.) *The Philosophical and Theological Works of John Hutchinson*, 12 vols. (London, 1748-49).

Works, vol. 1……. *Moses's Principia.*

Works, vol. 2……. *Essay towards the natural history of Bible.*

Works, vol. 3……...*Moses's Sine Principio.*

Works, vol. 4…….. *The Confusion of Tongues and the Trinity of the Gentiles.*

Works, vol. 5…….. *Power Essential and Mechanical … In which the design of sir Isaac Newton and Dr. S. Clarke is laid open.*

Works, vol. 6……. *Glory or Gravity, or Glory Essential and the Cherubim Explained.*

Works, vol. 7…….. *The Hebrew Writings perfect, being the detection of the forgeries of the Jews.*

Works, vol. 8……..*The Religion of Satan, or Natural Religion and the 'Data of Christianity, pt.i.*

Works, vol. 9……*Data of Christianity, pt. ii*.

Works, vol. 10…… *The Human Frame.*

Works, vol. 11……*Glory Mechanical….with a treatise on the Columns before the temple.*

Works, vol. 12……*Tracts.*

INTRODUCTION

Hutchinsonianism, a movement relatively new to readers of intellectual history, has suffered from a lack of overall definition; its parts have been studied better than the whole. This study promises to place the followers of John Hutchinson within the agenda of the intellectual history of the long eighteenth century. One of the objectives of this thesis is to test the assumptions and conclusions of the existing historiography in relation to Hutchinsonianism. The second, and main objective, is to provide a survey of Hutchinsonian thought, the reasons for its emergence, the progression of events that enabled it to spread to certain intellectual circles, the confrontations of Hutchinsonians and their 'others', orthodox and heterodox alike, and its downfall. The whole battlefield of the diverse forces of Enlightenment thought can be observed in the range of Hutchinsonian interests. This account tries to offer a fresh perspective on the way such an intellectual movement should be treated, combining narrative with an interdisciplinary approach, redressing some of the fallacies of the common conception of Enlightenment thought by examining a singularity such as Hutchinsonianism.

A fundamental difference between this study and the existing historiography of this movement will be its integrated approach, employing all the aspects of Hutchinsonianism to contribute to a suggested definition of

the movement. Although the themes explored in the first chapter will shape the format of the subsequent chapters – fundamental issues concerning the theory of knowledge, Biblical exegesis, natural philosophy, Hebraic studies and the socio-cultural history of the movement – special attention will be given to handling these issues as integral parts of the entire body of thought. It will become clear that my critique of the historiography given in the first chapter has evolved from an appreciation that the drawbacks of the existing historiography stem from the preoccupations of different historians with just individual aspects of the movement rather than the movement as a whole.

The first chapter will thus be a critique of the historiography of this movement. Historians who have written about Hutchinsonianism will be introduced with a special emphasis on the shortcomings of their individual approaches in isolation. The chapter concludes with an agenda that outlines the methodology to be followed.

An effort to grant legitimacy to aspects of Hutchinsonian thought within the long eighteenth century should include a history of the movement right from its beginning. Hence the primary objective of this study is to shed light on the early stages of this movement in particular. A narrative of Hutchinson and his early followers has not previously been constructed and hopefully such a contribution will encourage further study.

The multifaceted task of providing such a narrative starts with the examination of the reasons behind the birth of this movement. In Chapter Two, the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century intellectual environment will be described in order to explain the genesis of Hutchinsonian movement: why it emerged and the context in which it

emerged, referring to Hutchinson himself and to his earliest and closest followers. A narrative of Hutchinson's life is necessary as part of the study of the movement, since an understanding of what motivated Hutchinson forms part of the frame of reference for a further investigation of his followers.

The early followers of Hutchinson have been absent from the historiography of the movement. The reluctance of historians to study the interests of early sympathisers, such as Julius Bate, Robert Spearman, Duncan Forbes of Culloden and Benjamin Holloway, is difficult to understand, for the very nature of this fellowship was shaped by these early disciples. Chapter Two will thus provide biographical information on Hutchinson and the early followers, and will examine the connections between them all.

In order to locate Hutchinsonian philosophy in his period, the main aspects of Hutchinson's system will be traced in Chapter Three. These will include his Trinitarian cosmology, his anti-Newtonianism, his theory of knowledge and use of analogy, his Hebrew method and style of Biblical exegesis, and his ideas on history of religion. The argument put forward in Chapter Three is that Hutchinson's theory was designed to have credibility in all the most urgent contemporary fields of debate. For Hutchinson, all parts of his system were related, be it science, philosophy, history or linguistics, and together amounted to a reform of religion.

An extensive accumulation of primary sources informs Chapter Four. Bristol Reference Library holds a substantial collection of correspondence between the early Hutchinsonians, including Hutchinson himself and the Catcotts, father and son. This collection has been little exploited by

historians who have dealt with the subject of Hutchinsonianism. Yet it is a valuable source for illuminating the nature of the relationship between Hutchinson and his early followers. In addition, it is also a valuable source for the *Elahim* Controversy, a pamphlet war initiated by the Hutchinsonian Alexander Stopford Catcott. The Bristol manuscript collection in addition to the available pamphlet literature provides an opportunity to delve into the heart of the debate. This pursuit introduces one of the defining characteristics of the early phases of the Hutchinsonian undertaking: Hebrew studies. The narrative of the long Hutchinsonian controversy provided in Chapter Four will contribute a great deal towards my overall aim of identifying the distinctive features of the movement. The key conclusion of Chapter Four is that Hutchinsonians were unique in using their Hebrew method as a defence of a specifically Protestant, Trinitarian identity which essentially had to be based on scripture, an authentic, revealed text.

The later stages of the *Elahim* controversy introduce us to the Oxford Hutchinsonians, who are the subject of Chapter Five. In this chapter, careful attention has been applied to answering the question: how Hutchinsonian ideas might have been introduced to, and found a home, at Oxford. Chapter Five will also attempt to suggest that Hutchinsonianism, while of remaining influence, had started losing its systematic coherence. The argument that Hutchinsonians were less and less willing to embrace the most controversial elements of their mentor's teaching, such as his method in Hebraic studies and his vehement anti-Newtonianism, is not born out by the evidence, as both of these features of the Hutchinsonian undertaking continued to survive in Oxford. The chapter will show how Hutchinsonianism changed subtly, as

each follower took up particular aspects of the movement and made them their main Hutchinsonian interests. However, this shift should not be exaggerated. 'The great undertaking', as one Oxonian Hutchinsonian called it, remained essentially the same. The shift in emphasis that there was came from the desire of Hutchinsonians to relate themselves to the current intellectual moods. To exemplify this, the careers of George Horne, William Jones and Alexander Catcott will be taken into consideration.

Chapter Six takes the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Hutchinsonians as its subject matter. I will try to raise and answer the question of how and why the movement changed in nature in this period. The reasons behind the need for change will be investigated through the available correspondence between Hutchinsonians themselves and the ways in which this exhibited a change in their interests and the subject matter of their publications. The main problematic of Chapter Six will be one of definition. As far as the Hutchinsonian movement is concerned, it becomes harder to find definable characteristics which made them stand out in the later eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century.

An appendix to the thesis provides biographical information on the followers of the movement, with a list of their publications. I wished to integrate each and every follower into the story of the movement — the appendix stands as a tribute to them.

Many of the conclusions reached in individual chapters of this thesis are not independent of one another. Together they contribute the characteristics that go to make up an overall definition of Hutchinsonianism. The Hutchinsonian movement is best considered in the context of what might

be called the fideistic branch of Enlightenment thought. With the attempt to use all possible means, including Enlightenment tools, to defend the fundamental points of Orthodox Christian belief, the idea of a 'fideistic branch of the Enlightenment' is not as paradoxical as it might seem to some. The tools for this purpose ranged from a 'sensationalist', even in a sense empirical, approach to the natural world, cosmology, revelation and the history of religion.

This study offers the Hutchinsonians a legitimate place in the intellectual movements of the long eighteenth century. The Hutchinsonians were genuinely representative of many aspects of Enlightenment thought and practice. In their emphasis on Trinitarianism, a paradigm under threat, they were 'on the winning side'. The order of things, they argued, need not be turned upside down because of the use of 'enlightenment' tools of enquiry. The Hutchinsonian system represented a 'paradigm regained'.

CHAPTER 1

A VARIETY OF 'HUTCHINSONIANISMS'

How differently the same things will appear to different men, and how men of learning, through habits of thinking, may be unprepared to judge of common things.

William Jones, *Memoirs of the Life,*
Studies and Writings of George Horne (London, 1795): p. xiv.

John Hutchinson, whose doctrines have come to be called 'Hutchinsonianism', was born near Middleham in Yorkshire in 1674. By profession a land steward to the Duke of Somerset, Hutchinson in the 1720s began to expound what has been commonly regarded as a system of natural philosophy. His activity was made possible by the patronage of his employer. He attracted attention as a natural philosopher chiefly by virtue of the anti-Newtonianism of his cosmology, founded on a singular mode of interpreting the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament. He died in 1737, but until the first half of the nineteenth century Hutchinson's views never ceased to attract followers.

The study of Hutchinsonianism is long established, but not extensive. Definitions of Hutchinsonianism in the historiography differ from one historian to another. This introductory chapter will be devoted to a presentation of the various historical interpretations of Hutchinsonianism, which will illustrate the need for a complete examination of the different aspects of the movement. It is evident that there were people who identified themselves as Hutchinsonians, but the definition of a single philosophy that would embrace all features does not emerge obviously from the historiography.

The aim of this chapter is to seek for a definition of Hutchinsonianism through the historiography of the subject. Later on, this description will be put under the microscope in the course of the assessment provided by this work. The gaps in the treatment of the movement will be pointed out through a thematic outline. One reason for doing this will be to draw attention to the fallibility of the historiography where an interdisciplinary approach is lacking. The necessity of taking an interdisciplinary approach, including an historical approach, will become clear.

1.1. A Critique of the Historiography

David Katz points out that 'the influence [of] the Hutchinsonians was enormous in the eighteenth century',[1] yet no full-scale study of the movement has been undertaken. We have, at best, only articles and extended comments in works dealing with other subjects. The fluidity of the

[1] D. S. Katz, 'Moses's Principia: Hutchinsonianism and Newton's Critics,' in J. E. Force and R. H. Popkin (eds.), *The Books of Nature and Scripture: Recent Essays on Natural Philosophy, Theology and Biblical Criticism in the Netherlands of Spinoza's Time and the British Isles of Newton's Time* (Dortrecht: Kluwer, 1994): p. 205.

boundaries between religion, politics and science in the eighteenth century can hardly be overemphasized. The historiography, while not entirely neglecting an interdisciplinary approach, has tended to overemphasize either a history of science approach or, less commonly, a history of religion perspective. The authors are not necessarily to be faulted for this, in view of the brevity of their works, but a more complete study may achieve a better balance.

Quite apart from the inadequacies of existing definitions of Hutchinsonianism, there are insufficiencies in the telling of the Hutchinsonian story. John Hutchinson himself rarely appears in the historiography of Hutchinsonianism. The way Hutchinsonians perceived Hutchinson is not studied at all, and the overall historiography of the movement omits the actual interactions of Hutchinsonians. The surviving correspondence has received little attention, especially that from the earliest stages of the movement. Almost nothing has been published on how this movement started, how Hutchinson gained followers, and how Hutchinsonianism came to be introduced to academic circles, as in Oxford and Cambridge. The Oxford connection has been noted, especially after the 1750s, but without much detail and without a narration of the early Hutchinsonians in Oxford. A definitive point for the Oxford circle is the companionship of George Horne and William Jones, which needs to be explored further:

> Hutchinsonianism, a somewhat freakish movement, had only a small following at Oxford, but it had at least one influential spokesman in the kindly and estimable George Horne. Horne had a close friend in William Jones, who had studied with him at

University College and with whom he collaborated in writing *A Full Answer to the Essay on Spirit*, in 1753.[2]

The Hutchinsonian circle in the universities during this period requires further investigation in a number of respects, chiefly the story of the early Hutchinsonians at Oxford and the ways in which Hutchinsonians diverged from Hutchinson himself. One might want to investigate their take on Newtonianism[3] or their inclination to develop the theological aspects of Hutchinsonianism.[4] The characteristics that the second generation of Hutchinsonians inherited from the first should be underlined in order to follow the enduring components of Hutchinsonianism.

The appeal of the Hutchinsonians in the eighteenth-century intellectual environment is something scholars have not investigated. The period around or just after mid-century produced the most extensive body of Hutchinsonian writing – and of course a considerable body of anti-Hutchinsonian writings. Hutchinsonians were engaged in many of the debates of the period, and their pamphlets generated much controversy. The senior Catcott with his *Supreme and Inferior Elahim* initiated a pamphlet war with Arthur Bedford, in which other Hutchinsonians such as Bate, Daniel Gittins and John Hutchinson himself were involved. This controversy, which

[2] V. H. H. Green, 'Religion in the Colleges 1715–1800,' in L. S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. V, The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986): p. 465.

[3] See, for example, George Horne, *A Fair, Candid, and Impartial Case between Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Hutchinson* (London, 1799). Also see William Jones, *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy* (Oxford, 1762). Jones's cosmology, while decidedly Hutchinsonian, was a criticism of the Newtonian system and an examination of its inconsistencies, rather than a complete rejection of it.

[4] George Horne, for example, acknowledged that his calling gave him little opportunity for 'nice enquiry into philosophical minutiae'. See *George Horne to … Browning* (no date), Cambridge University Library, Horne Papers, Add. MSS. 8134/B/1: p. 44. Horne did, however, still find time to write on cosmology, while Jones's practice of the experimental science found support from Lord Bute. See William Jones, *Memoirs of the Life, Studies and Writings of George Horne* (London, 1795).

lasted for decades, is virtually absent from the histories of the movement. An investigation of this controversy is therefore necessary to shed light on Hutchinsonian biblical exegesis as a part of the defence of Trinitarianism mounted by Hutchinson and his followers, and on the contemporary response they received while doing so.

Surprisingly, there has been almost no scholarly effort to try to suggest the ways contemporaries perceived Hutchinsonians. Hutchinsonian pamphlets, however, were extensively reviewed and criticised by the literary and philosophical journals of the time, especially after the middle of the eighteenth century. The *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *Monthly Review* frequently published reviews and critiques of Hutchinsonian pamphlets after 1750.

The existing historiography would, on the whole, suggest that, in dividing up Hutchinson's thought, a beginning should be made with his anti-Newtonian cosmology. In fact however, Hutchinsonianism was an integrated system and it matters little with which part one begins. Hutchinson held that a true reading — his own of course — of the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament yielded a true cosmology.[5] That cosmology had been disclosed to the first recipient of revelation — Adam — and reiterated in the Old Testament. It was unequivocally Christian and Trinitarian. The sinful distortion of this revelation by pointing the text of the Old Testament through a variety of Talmudic traditions was an offence to Christians by the very fact that the truth about religion had been hidden from them for centuries. Further, Deist attacks obviously undermined the role of revelation with their

[5] *Works*, vol. 5. Hutchinson's anti-Newtonian ideas were most clearly expressed in this study.

view of the history of religion and so it was only natural that Hutchinsonians took a stand against such arguments as well. Thus, a defence of Hutchinsonianism could be conducted in three main fields – cosmology, Biblical exegesis, and the history of religion. A consideration of the cultural history of the movement is necessary to reveal the network of relationships between Hutchinson and his followers and among the followers themselves.

Certainly an accurate account of Hutchinsonianism needs a wider context than that of the history of science. Popkin argues for the necessity of including religion in studies of seventeenth-century philosophy and science. This certainly holds true for the eighteenth century as well. Popkin observes:

> The above-named scientists [Kepler, Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Freud and Einstein] had their religious or irreligious views that were involved with their scientific concerns. And, as we know too well, the impact of their work on religion has been of great importance to the broader intellectual world, and the impact of religion on the acceptance of their science has been and is part of the ongoing intellectual world [6]

This is also true for systems, including Newtonianism. A full understanding of these ideas and authors needs to take into account scientific, religious, and political ideas and the relationship of these ideas to other areas of thought. Otherwise, the systems of thought remain nothing but mere abstractions, of interest, perhaps, to the cosmologist, but hardly to the historian. In view of this, a definition of Newtonianism must be understood here that includes, not only its promotion of New Science and a Lockean theory of knowledge, but also its reputation of being anti-Trinitarian in matters of religion. Newton, while trying to differentiate which writing was revealed and which was not:

[6] R. H. Popkin, *The Third Force in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1992): p. 269.

> departed from the more orthodox belief that every letter in the Bible was inspired, and he allowed himself to rove over the perilous seas of Biblical criticism, adopting ideas from contemporaries such as the Catholic Richard Simon and the Huguenot Jean Le Clerc, whose works were in his library.[7]

Not only the cosmology but also the biblical scholarship of Newton should be taken into consideration when talking about the anti-Newtonianism of the Hutchinsonians. Newton showed his Deist/Arian tendencies in suggesting that Moses was most probably a storyteller, bending the stories told in the myths in order to emphasize the monotheistic truth.[8] The people who studied pagan myths, intentionally rejecting the hidden Christian meanings, were deists and did not escape the criticism of the Hutchinsonians. The uniqueness of Judaic monotheism was essential for Hutchinsonians in their defence of Christianity through Old Testament texts. This defence was directed not only at Newtonians but also at deists, and whoever else attacked orthodox, Protestant, Trinitarian belief.

One problem in the historiography is the lack of an historical approach. Scholars commonly distinguish between early Hutchinsonians and later ones, but what makes them different from each other has not itself been examined in detail. Perhaps the most neglected point in the historiography is that there has been no suggestion of what makes Hutchinsonians a unified group apart from the very obvious statement that they were in some way followers of John Hutchinson's system of thought. An historical approach must emphasize the need for caution when using a blanket term to cover all the people who sympathized with Hutchinson's ideas over a century and a

[7] See F. E. Manuel, *Isaac Newton, Historian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963): p. 59 for a discussion of Isaac Newton's attitude towards the Biblical account.
[8] F. E. Manuel, *A Portrait of Sir Isaac Newton* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968): p. 364.

half, especially where there is no clear suggestion as to what being a Hutchinsonian really means. The presentation of Hutchinsonianism by various historians has been either too broad or has fallen short of reality. One reason for such a problem is that the subject matter has been treated thematically, which has often led to a dismissal of diversity and change amongst Hutchinsonians.

1.2. Habits of thinking

The inclination to see the Enlightenment as a period of confrontation and polarization in the relationship between science and religion has discouraged the study of religious-oriented science. With the Enlightenment regarded as having an 'obviously critical and sceptical attitude towards religion'[9] and the history of science long regarded as being concerned only with the Enlightenment part of the Enlightenment/Counter-Enlightenment debate, the Hutchinsonian movement has accordingly attracted little attention. Perhaps the most negative attitude towards the Hutchinsonians in this respect has been shown by Leslie Stephen. His enlightened spirit apparently did not appreciate the orthodoxy of the Hutchinsonians. Stephen saw the way the Hutchinsonians used 'divine analogy' as their method for seeing signs of Christian truth in ancient myths and biblical text as a vain and necessarily vain effort. Despite his dismissive approach, Stephen gives a fairly detailed account of Hutchinson himself and especially William Jones. Talking about Jones, Stephen argues that 'Jones's writings are chiefly fanciful analogies for

[9] E. Cassirer, quoted in D. S. Katz, 'Moses's Principia,': p. 210.

the confutation of infidels and the instruction of infants'[10] Yet Stephen points out the necessity for a study on Hutchinsonian ideas, which is an attitude not common among his fellow historians. John Hunt in his book on *Religious Thought in England* felt that the Hutchinsonians were hardly worth mentioning:

> The theology of John Hutchinson would scarcely require notice but for the influence it had over several eminent men in the last century. Many, indeed, who were called Hutchinsonians, repudiated any connection with the founder of the party, though they adopted his views and used his arguments.[11]

Brian Young, in his study on 'England's experience of Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment in the eighteenth century' points out the necessity of avoiding an approach to history that would lead to a 'relentlessly secularising interpretation of Enlightenment'[12]. Such an approach is eschewed here and a wider, more comprehensive vision of eighteenth-century science and intellectual history will be adopted. An unbiased and integrated approach to the presentation of Hutchinsonianism is necessary. The criticism of the suggestion that Hutchinsonianism was the 'mirror image' of Newtonianism needs to be made.

In the light of the points made above, let us now trace the approaches taken by the historiography of this movement. Accordingly, first will be the history of science perspective taken by historians that has ended up with an exaggeration of the anti-Newtonianism aspect of Hutchinsonian thinking, regarding it as the backbone of the movement.

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[10] L. Stephen, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Kinokuniya Co. Ltd, 1991): p. 391.
[11] J. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England from the Reformation to the end of the last century* (London, 1870–1873): p. 94.
[12] See Brian W. Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) p. 85.

1.3. History of Science Perspective

In the history of science, Hutchinsonianism has been a neglected field. Books on the history of science dealing with the eighteenth century generally fail to mention Hutchinsonianism. In general histories of science, there is no mention of Hutchinsonianism, but other anti-Newtonian thinkers, having 'acceptably progressive' ideas, such as deists and freethinkers, are discussed.[13] In other words, histories of science have too often taken a teleological, progressive approach. The progressive agenda of historians of science, dealing with eighteenth century as the forerunner of modernity exhibits itself as a problem that has to be tackled in a study of a movement like Hutchinsonianism.

The idea that Newtonian science enjoyed success and domination in the early eighteenth century puts movements like Hutchinsonianism out of context. The general accounts of the Newtonian revolution of the early eighteenth century are to blame for this.[14]

Michael Byrne in his unpublished dissertation on alternative cosmologies to Newtonianism states his case for dealing with the anti-Newtonianism of the Hutchinsonians by quoting another historian:

> Some historians such as Cantor, Wilde and others, have documented the existence of strong anti-Newtonian themes in

[13] See, for example, A. Wolf, *A History of Science, Technology and Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century*, 2 vols. (New York, 1939.), and C. Gillespie, *The Edge of Objectivity, An Essay in the History of Scientific Ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

[14] M. C. Jacob, *Newtonians and the English Revolution 1689–1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976). See also M. C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment, Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). See also L. Stewart, *The Rise of Public Science: Rhetoric, Technology, and Natural Philosophy in Newtonian Britain, 1660-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) and J. Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the restoration to the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

> natural philosophy — but this has not been enough, by itself, to damage the apparent need for the tradition-seeking method.[15]

The historiographical tradition that Bryne was trying to challenge was that 'which stressed — to the virtual exclusion of all variable alternatives — a view of the early eighteenth-century natural philosophy as entirely dominated by Newtonianism.'[16] I share Byrne's intentions in pointing out the necessity of breaking up the belief that Newtonian science barely had a sustainable opposition during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. However, an overemphasis on the anti-Newtonianism of the Hutchinsonian movement has its own problems and some of them will be presented here.

The established view in the historiography is that Hutchinsonianism derived from an anti-Newtonian stance in describing the cosmos.[17] Historians have been inclined to deal with Hutchinsonian cosmology vis-à-vis Newtonian cosmology.[18] The danger lies in taking the Newtonian cosmology as the reference point for a definition of the Hutchinsonian cosmology, which necessarily leads to the interpretation that Hutchinsonianism was anti-Newtonian. Although anti-Newtonianism is one of the issues to investigate in relation to Hutchinsonianism, this feature can hardly be taken as the backbone of the movement. In the course of this dissertation it will become clear that anti-Newtonianism was a tool of the movement and not its aim.

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[15] S. Schaffer, 'The show that never ends: perpetual motion in the early eighteenth century.' *British Journal for the History of Science*, 28 (1995): pp. 157-89, quoted by M. Byrne, *Alternative Cosmologies in early eighteenth-century England* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1998): p. 12.
[16] M. Byrne, 'Alternative Cosmologies,': p. 12.
[17] See, for example, A. J. Kuhn, 'Glory or Gravity: Hutchinson vs. Newton,' *JHI* 22 (July–September 1961): pp. 303–322; R. Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989): pp. 79-81.
[18] J. E. Force, *The Books of Nature and Scripture: Recent Essays on Natural Philosophy, Theology, and Biblical Criticism in the Netherlands of Spinoza's Time and in the British Isles of Newton's Time* (Dortrecht: Kluwer Academic Press, 1994).

Apart from its being a variable in the Hutchinsonian equation, the anti-Newtonianism of this movement changed over time and in different hands. It cannot be even said that all the earlier Hutchisonians were inimical towards Newtonians. The Lord President of the Court Session, Duncan Forbes, certainly was not.[19]

Most historians have placed almost exclusive emphasis on Hutchinsonian cosmology and its theory of matter within the boundaries of the anti-Newtonian aspect of the movement. A study on Alexander Catcott by Neve and Porter, however, presents the junior Catcott's Hutchinsonianism as being a blend of 'glory and geology'.[20] His blend of religion and empiricism was fully in tune with eighteenth-century 'science' as a whole and cannot simply be dismissed as anti-Newtonian. In testing the scientific data with the biblical account in his studies on the existence and universality of the Flood, Catcott is fully in the mainstream of eighteenth-century geology and the religious, revelatory element quite necessary:

> With the 18th century we see the gap between the fieldwork and the theory of natural history bridged. People like Catcott and Hutton combined fieldwork with theory. So people like Benjamin Holloway, Charles Manson, John Strachey, William Borlase, William Stukeley, and John Mitchell had to both do empirical research and comment on the theories of the time at the same time.[21]

[19] I am grateful to John Shaw of the National Library of Scotland for providing me with information about Duncan Forbes and his Newtonian acquaintances. The mathematician and Newtonian, Colin Maclaurin, was a friend of Forbes and the tutor of his son was another Newtonian, Patrick Murdoch. See also *Culloden Papers: Comprising an extensive and interesting correspondence from the year 1625 to 1748… To which is prefixed, an introduction, containing memoirs of the right honorable Duncan Forbes* … (London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1815).

[20] M. Neve and R. Porter, 'Alexander Catcott: Glory and Geology,' *British Journal for the History of Science* 9 (1977): pp. 37–60.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

This interpretation is quite reasonable, but it holds true not just for the junior Catcott, nor just for geology. Clearly Catcott should not simply be seen as an anti-Newtonian and nor should other Hutchinsonians.

C. B. Wilde also attempts a modification of the definition of Hutchinsonianism as anti-Newtonianism. He acknowledges the need for a view of Hutchinsonianism that stretches beyond the history of science. He does, therefore, advert to Hutchinsonian religion and politics, but without any extensive discussion of them. Wilde's assessment of Hutchinsonianism does not really exceed the limits of the history of science and suffers from an over-theoretical approach, where Hutchinsonianism remains defined by its anti-Newtonianism.[22] James E. Force with his study on the critics of Newtonianism in early eighteenth-century England also discusses Hutchinsonianism in much the same limited context.[23] Many real Hutchinsonians fail to satisfy the fully-developed anti-Newtonianism suggested by these scholars. The immediate disciples of John Hutchinson and the later generation of Hutchinson's followers — figures such as Bishop George Horne and William Jones — are too different from each other to fit Wilde's definition at all well.[24] William Jones, while talking about the reputation of George Horne as a Hutchinsonian, does not even mention Newton or anti-Newtonianism:

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[22] C. B. Wilde, 'Hutchinsonianism, Natural Philosophy and Religious Controversy in Eighteenth Century Britain,' *History of Science* 18 (1980): pp. 1–24.

[23] J. E. Force, 'The Breakdown of the Newtonian Synthesis of Science and Religion: Hume, Newton and the Royal Society,' in J. E. Force and R. H. Popkin (eds.), *Essays on the Context, Nature and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology* (Dortrecht: Kluwer, 1990): pp. 143–165; see also H. Metzger, *Attraction Universelle et Religion Naturelle Chez Commentateurs Anglais de Newton* (Paris, 1938).

[24] See M. Heyd, '*Be Sober and Reasonable,' The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden, New York and Koln: Brill, 1995) for his comparison of William Jones and George-Louis Le Sage in terms of their anti-Newtonianism.

> It is known to the public, that he [George Horne] came very early upon the stage as an author, though an anonymous one, and brought himself into some difficulty under the denomination of an Hutchinsonian; for this was the name given to those gentlemen who studied Hebrew and examined the writings of John Hutchinson Esq. the famous Mosaic philosopher, and became inclined to favour his opinions in theology and philosophy.[25]

Of course this also once more introduces the problem of whether, and how, the later Hutchinsonians should be treated differently from the earlier Hutchinsonians. Historians have mistakenly continued using the same characteristics to define Hutchinsonians as a whole. What must be done in this respect is to follow the changes in the pursuits of followers with a chronological perspective and try and pin down the more enduring aspects of Hutchinsonian agenda. More attention also needs to be paid to the individuality of particular Hutchinsonians. Figures like Benjamin Holloway and Alexander Stopford Catcott are too important to skip as far as a narrative of this movement is concerned, yet are scarcely mentioned in the historiography. Accounts of such people should be welcome to help provide a better understanding of the characteristics of Hutchinsonianism.

The effort to relate Hutchinsonianism more closely to religion has to be appreciated, though not without caution. Wilde has already argued that the increasing tendency to accept activity as a property of matter itself, rather than ascribe it to outside forces, material or immaterial, was directly connected to theological developments.[26] However, his discussion of this is insufficiently related to the eighteenth-century literature on religion and philosophy and may again be described as over-theoretical. Wilde,

[25] William Jones, *Memoirs of… George Horne*: p. 22.
[26] C.B. Wilde, 'Matter and Spirit as Natural Symbols in Eighteenth Century British Natural Philosophy,' *British Journal for the History of Science* 15 (1982): pp. 99–131.

emphasizing Hutchinsonianism as anti-Newtonian, explains the Hutchinsonians' stand in proposing that matter is inert, without referring to the scriptural basis that Hutchinsonians used to defend their stance. Hutchinsonianism and, for that matter, Newtonianism, are left too abstract as systems unless the political and religious connotations of being a Newtonian or a Hutchinsonian are elaborated on. Such an approach can also falsify the thought of the later followers of Hutchinson, whose anti-Newtonian zeal was considerably diminished — a development that, though acknowledged, has not been extensively investigated. A chronological approach may help us to understand how anti-Newtonianism fared as a feature of this movement.

The main problem with an exaggerated history of science perspective as presented above in the examples of various historians who have dealt with Hutchinsonianism is the fact that the whole of the movement appears to be mainly anti-Newtonian and little else. In my interdisciplinary approach, anti-Newtonianism will be seen as part of the Hutchinsonian approach that was constructed for a purpose — the defence of Protestant, Trinitarian Christianity. Anti-Newtonianism was a weapon, not necessarily used by all Hutchinsonian with the same rigour or force, for their attack on the heterodox attitudes towards religion and science.

Attempts have been made to break away from this overemphasis on the Hutchinsonians' anti-Newtonianism, even when this has been the starting point. A. J. Kuhn, despite his choice of anti-Newtonian as a basic description of Hutchinsonians, concludes that Hutchinsonians were something other than

simply anti-Newtonians.[27] He stresses the Hutchinsonians' anti-deism and their interest in the history of religion. Hutchinsonian approach to myth needs a serious investigation for various reasons. John Hutchinson's own conception of myths and his attitude towards the deist interpretation of heathen texts has not been much discussed. Hutchinson thought the early seventeenth-century Dutch, German and French theologians and in his time Isaac Newton and the Newtonian, Samuel Clarke, were fundamentally mistaken in relying on such writings to analyse revealed truth.[28]

Kuhn also repeatedly emphasizes the Hutchinsonians' use of analogy as their tool for finding Trinitarian messages in the Old Testament prophecies and for opposing the Newtonian philosophy of nature.

> Fire philosophers of various sectarian convictions elaborated their theories on the origin, and final conflagration of the universe. The fire–light–air plenum of the Hutchinsonians was central both to their anti-Newtonian mechanics and Trinitarian theology. Of the fire philosophies of the age it had the most confident followers.[29]

Kuhn further points out that Hutchinson's vision of the cosmos as an image of the Trinity seems to have inspired his later followers with an inclination to return to something closer to patristic and medieval Christianity. These angles all need further exploration.

1.4. Hutchinsonian Politics

[27] A. J. Kuhn, 'English Deism and the Development of Romantic Mythological Syncretism', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 71(5) (December 1956): pp. 1094–1116, p.1116.
[28] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 128.
[29] A. J. Kuhn, 'Nature Spiritualized: Aspects of Anti-Newtonianism,' in R. Paulson and A. Stein (eds.), *ELH Essays for Earl R. Wasserman* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976): p. 118.

Hutchinsonian politics have been generally assumed to be uniformly Tory.[30] The argument has concentrated on how the success of Newtonian science went hand in hand with the 'victory' of the Whig Constitution, implying that anti-Newtonians must therefore in some way be anti-Whig. In an attempt to display the relationship between the dynamics of the Glorious Revolution and the philosophical origins of modern science, Jacob suggests that Anglican science, by which is meant religiously oriented science, 'failed to eradicate the radicalism of the English Revolution.'[31] Yet this straightforward linking of science and politics may not suit Hutchinsonianism, especially the immediate disciples of Hutchinson, or at least not in such a simple way. Hutchinson's own patron, Charles Seymour, the so-called 'proud Duke of Somerset', was a moderate Whig. Hutchinson's clerical disciples such as Julius Bate and Daniel Gittins seem, as often as not, to have been of the same persuasion. The relationships of John Hutchinson and early Hutchinsonians such as Bate and Gittins with Whig patrons were not necessarily difficult, as J. S. Chamberlain argues:

> In Sussex, Whigs came to represent protectors of the church, not detractors. It may be helpful at this point to review the distinctive elements of High Churchmanship and then try to examine whether Whig patronage affected or undermined them … High-Church zeal for ecclesiastical order and authority was not a hindrance to Whig patronage either. Whigs did not demand that their clients drop the rigid High-Church understanding of the ecclesiastical constitution in favour of a more flexible (or Latitudianarian) one[32]

[30] C. D. A. Leighton, 'Hutchinsonianism: A Counter-Enlightenment Reform Movement,' *Journal of Religious History* 23(2) (June 1999): pp. 168–184.
[31] M. C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), and see J. R. Jacob and M. C. Jacob, 'The Anglican Origins of Modern Science,' *Isis* 71 (1980): pp. 251–67, p. 266.
[32] J.S. Chamberlain, *Accommodating High Churchman: the Clergy of Sussex 1700–1745* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997): p. 86.

The later Hutchinsonians such as George Horne and William Jones were patronized by, and on familiar terms with, important political figures, such as Lord Bute and the Earl of Liverpool, neither of whom can be categorised straightforwardly as Tories. Both the above clerics were certainly active in the conservative politics of the revolutionary period, but this embraced many who would originally have been classed Whigs. It may well be asked to what extent the political views of Hutchinsonians rested on Hutchinsonian foundations. The historian Gavin White, who regards Hutchinsonians as hand in hand with the High Church ideology of the period, argues that Hutchinsonian teachings were used as propaganda against the naturalization of Jews, but this rests on limited evidence.[33] His argument that the reason for the circulation of Hutchinsonian books after 1753 was to produce arguments against the naturalization of the Jews is too vague. There were probably a couple of pamphlets written on the subject by William Romaine, who dropped his Hutchinsonian stance in his later years.[34]

The suggestion that there was a Hutchinsonian political ideology, and necessarily a Tory one, is disputable. The Hutchinsonian enthusiasms of such a notable figure in the Whig establishment of the mid-century as Duncan Forbes of Culloden make that clear. A study by Anita Guerrini suggests that in the early eighteenth century there were also a considerable number of Tory Newtonians, such as Archibald Pitcarne and David Gregory with their own

[33] G. White, *The Scottish Episcopal Church, A New History* (Edinburgh: General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, 1998): p. 2. Another study of an individual Hutchinsonian may be mentioned here. This is G. White's 'Hutchinsonianism in Eighteenth Century Scotland,' *Records of the Scottish Church History* 21, (2) (1982): pp. 157–69. Despite the title White is largely preoccupied with the Scottish Episcopalian divine, John Skinner.

[34] William Romaine, *An Answer to the Pamphlet Entitled 'Consideration on the Bill to Permit Persons Professing the Jewish Religion to be Naturalized'* (London, 1753); and William Romaine, *A Full Answer to a Fallacious Apology … in Favor of Jews* (London, 1753).

Tory Newtonian circles.[35] In the same way, except perhaps during the triumph of conservative political thinking in the late eighteenth century, we cannot assume Hutchinsonians were Tory in any specifically political sense.

1.5. Hutchinsonians: In defence of revelation?

Historians have been interested in the efforts of Hutchinsonians to reconcile the Book of Genesis with geology. Such an interest shown by Hutchinsonians was not peculiar, since the belief that the Bible contained accurate descriptions of how the cosmos was formed and worked was only really shaken during the course of the nineteenth century. Studies in geology and an increasing scepticism about the Old Testament as revelation encouraged defenders to try to find proofs of God's revelation through the biblical texts.[36] The proof of the existence of the Flood and the accuracy of the Genesis story in the Old Testament was one primary concern of Hutchinsonians.[37] The interest in flood stories in the Old Testament derived from the question of how God operated through natural processes. As the tools of geology developed, the interpretation of the Flood story gained both a rival and an ally from extra-biblical evidence supplied by the geologists of the eighteenth century.[38]

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[35] A. Guerrini, 'The Tory Newtonians: Gregory, Pitcairne and their Circle,' *Journal of British Studies* 25 (1986): pp. 288–311.

[36] H. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative, A Study in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974): p. 5.

[37] Alexander Catcott, *A Treatise on the Deluge* (London, 1761).

[38] The tradition in natural history of adjusting the natural account to the biblical has many examples from the eighteenth century. See, for example, John Woodward, *An Attempt Toward a Natural History of Fossils* (London, 1729); Charles Leigh, *The Natural History of Lancashire, Cheshire and the Peak in Derbyshire* (London, 1700); John Morton, *The Natural History of Northamptonshire* (London, 1712); E. Mendes da Costa, *A Natural History of Fossils* (London, 1757). John Woodward was the mentor of John Hutchinson for some time and E. Mendes da Costa was an acquaintance of the Hutchinsonian Alexander Catcott. See Oxford Bodleian Library, Western MSS., Gough Wales 8: ff. 4–25.

As far as the existing historiography is concerned, the matter has not been treated properly. Historians have mainly dealt with the activities of the junior Catcott in this respect, without enlarging the argument to the overall sphere of the movement. This has to be tackled. A narrative of Hutchinsonian belief on the authority of the text in this matter should invite information on other Hutchinsonians who dealt with the subject, like William Jones.

Davis A. Young suggests that there were two groups of Christians who tried to relate the Bible to Earth's history: Christian naturalists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and practising Christian geologists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[39] Young argues that the Hutchinsonian, Catcott junior, was among those Christian naturalists. His claim that 'the great naturalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were predominantly literalists who used the Bible as a framework for their hypotheses about earth history' applies to a certain extent to Hutchinson's intentions and perhaps to Catcott's as well, but there were not many Hutchinsonians involved in diluvialism.[40] Young, in another work, suggests that Hutchinsonians were eighteenth-century opponents to extra-biblical evidence for the existence of Noah's flood,[41] but Young's argument is not correct in many respects. Hutchinsonian antipathy to extra-biblical evidence applied only to such evidence that was used to contradict the biblical

[39] D.A. Young, 'Scripture in the Hands of Geologists (Part One),' *Westminster Theological Journal* 49(1) (Spring 1987): pp. 1–34.
[40] Diluvialism was mainly a form of natural history where Scripture was the main source. Empirical evidence provided secondary information to help with the biblical account. The Flood was the most popular subject in this sense. There were different theories regarding the existence of the Flood and the reformation of the earth after it.
[41] D.A. Young, *The Biblical Flood, A Case Study of the Church's Response to Extrabiblical Evidence* (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995): pp. 76-77.

account. Nor was specialization in this area at all typical of Hutchinsonians in general.

Michael Neve and Roy Porter, in a similar fashion, locate Hutchinsonians as participants in the effort to adjust the natural with the biblical account.[42] In an intellectual environment where the biblical text had been subject to historical criticism by deists and others, Hutchinsonians, according to Neve and Porter, held onto the accuracy of the biblical account. The deist threat came mainly in the form of mockery of the biblical account, with the suggestion that what must be allegory should not be taken seriously. Yet, again, Hutchinsonians were hardly alone in the geological field in rejecting such criticism of the biblical account, nor can this issue be said to characterise Hutchinsonianism as a whole.

An article by Rhoda Rappaport on Noah's Flood in eighteenth-century thought likewise mentions the junior Catcott as a defender of the literal interpretation of the Flood story and as arguing for the universality of the Flood.[43] Yet Rappaport's approach, which sees Hutchinsonian concern with this issue within the vaguest definition of orthodoxy, seems unhelpful: 'In England for example, the established Church was "so comprehensive"… that orthodoxy would be hard to define in any but the broadest terms'.[44] If nothing else, no Hutchinsonian would have seen orthodoxy in such broad-Church terms. The Hutchinsonian movement has suffered much from such 'broad terms' of identification.

[42] M. Neve and R. Porter, 'Alexander Catcott': p. 37.
[43] R. Rappaport, 'Geology and Orthodoxy: The Case of Noah's Flood in Eighteenth Century Thought,' *British Journal for the History of Science* 12(37) (1978): pp. 1–18 (p. 7).
[44] Rappaport, 'Geology and Orthodoxy,': p. 6.

Defence of revelation through the literal interpretation of the Old Testament account of Genesis, in particular the Flood story, was a Hutchinsonian concern, but there is no traceable pattern in the approach to this question that is valid for all Hutchinsonians. Julius Bate, for example, found his own way of asserting the validity of the Genesis account, by translating and interpreting the text word by word with a criticism of the deist, Thomas Burnet, and the Newtonian Arian, William Whiston.[45] His fellow Hutchinsonian Robert Spearman, on the other hand, took up another method in defence of revelation, trying to refute Newtonian concepts through proving that a true cosmology is scriptural cosmology.[46]

Nevertheless, it has to be said that the fact that John Hutchinson's own interests in cosmology practically started with a project for the purpose of providing solid proofs from all over England for the existence of the Flood has been rather neglected.[47] Hutchinson's interest in the Old Testament as an account of the Creation and operation of the cosmos, and in the Flood story in particular, has been mentioned in most studies either as a passing comment or as a feature of the movement in its earlier stages. There is a need for an examination of Hutchinson's own understanding of the Old Testament's status as evidence. It would be most superficial to comment on

[45] Julius Bate, *The Philosophical Principles of Moses, asserted and defended, against the misinterpretations of Mr. Jennings* (London, 1744).
[46] Robert Spearman, *An Enquiry after Philosophy and Theology, Tending to show When and Whence Mankind came at the knowledge of these two important points* (Edinburgh, 1755).
[47] Hutchinson worked for some time for John Woodward, the physician, for the preparation of his book *The Natural History of the Earth …* (London, 1695). John Hutchinson published his first pamphlet during this period of study: *Observations by John Hutchinson mostly in the year 1706*. This pamphlet was a summary of his observations on several parts of England to serve Woodward's account of the universal deluge and the effects that it had upon the earth. In Woodward's work the flood and its consequences are described in uniquely radical terms – more radical than anything to be found even in Burnet's *Telluris Theologica Sacra*.

the characteristics of Hutchinsonianism without understanding John Hutchinson's reliance on the Old Testament.

Most historians have failed to explain the reason behind such enthusiastic defences of revelation by Hutchinsonians. G. N. Cantor has searched for a possible Hutchinsonian epistemology. He argues that reason and revelation were considered by Hutchinson to be allegorised historically in the biblical account of eating at the tree of knowledge.[48] A Lockean influence on Hutchinson's ideas on the capacity of human intellect to figure out religious truth, such as revelation, has also been suggested as an aspect of Hutchinson's theory of knowledge.[49] This suggestion, however, has not been elaborated extensively using specific Hutchinsonian pamphlets, especially those of Hutchinson himself. 'Furthermore, reason not only allows us to study the natural world by comparing material things (e.g. fossils), but it also permits us with the aid of the Bible to make inferences from sensory data to the unobservable realm.'[50] Cantor's study is valuable in tracing Hutchinson's ideas through his own writings, but the possible strands of influence on John Hutchinson have not been suggested, which still leaves his epistemology an isolated one. His approach is supplemented by that of C.D.A. Leighton. He relates Hutchinson himself to a specific strand of Lockeanism and mentions the possibility of a variety of Hutchinsonianisms.[51]

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[48] G.N. Cantor, 'Revelation and the Cyclical Cosmos of John Hutchinson,' in L. J. Jordanova and R. Porter (eds.), *Images of Earth: Essays in the History of Environmental Sciences* (Chalfont: St. Giles, 1979): p. 6.

[49] See Cantor, 'Revelation,' and C.D.A. Leighton, ''Knowledge of Divine Things:' A Study of Hutchinsonianism.' *History of European Ideas* 26 (2001): pp. 159-75.

[50] Quoted in Cantor, 'Revelation': p. 6.

[51] Leighton, 'Knowledge,'

One of the first people to talk about John Hutchinson in terms of his Old Testament interpretation was Katherine B. Collier. She tried to place Hutchinsonian efforts at popularising the account of Moses in its eighteenth-century context.[52] Collier concentrated on Hutchinson's reliance on the literal interpretation of the Old Testament as the explanation of how the universe worked and on his anti-Woodwardian attitude throughout *Moses's Principia*. Although there is accuracy in her interpretation, it does not contribute to a fuller understanding of Hutchinson's intentions. Her account of Hutchinsonianism simply rests on what John Hutchinson wrote, mainly in his *Moses's Principia*, and her examination of Hutchinsonian cosmology does not go beyond her chosen context, that is, eighteenth-century efforts to reconcile the Creation and Flood accounts in the Bible with the New Science.[53] This did not continue to be a pervasive Hutchinsonian interest. Hutchinson's belief in the absolute authority of Scripture over any other method can be seen in one of his remarks as late as 1732:

> The heavens…cannot be measured by man, then there can be no application of mathematics; and the title, calculation, book, and all is gone. We need not offer to prove that what the Scriptures say its true; every attempt to prove they are not so, prove they are.[54]

The deficiency of Collier's account comes from the lack of a proper historical context for the phenomena of Hutchinsonianism.

[52] K.B. Collier, *The Cosmogonies of Our Fathers, Some Theories of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934).
[53] Collier, *Cosmogonies*: pp. 234-241.
[54] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 224.

1.6. Hebrew

Recent scholarship has focused on the preoccupation of eighteenth-century Western thought with the Old Testament text. Some scholars even argue that the rationalist early Enlightenment had as its principal subjects the Jewish religion and its text.[55] The same argument has been made for the fideistic wing of Enlightenment thought.[56] A view of the Enlightenment that embraces both fideist-orthodox and rationalist wings of eighteenth-century thought will be adopted throughout this dissertation. The reason for such a choice is that both parties were inspired by certain currents of thought such as 'sensationalism', a particular interest in natural philosophy and the comparative history of religion, and, last but not least, a considerable interest in biblical hermeneutics.

Hutchinsonian biblical exegesis depended heavily on the idea that Hebrew was the language of God. So an exegesis of the Old Testament in its original language, which was unpointed Hebrew, as argued by Hutchinsonians, would enable someone to reach the essence of divine Truth, being the promise of Trinitarian Christianity via the revealed Text. Accordingly, Hutchinson developed an almost cabbalistic method of reading the Hebrew words to signify the true Christian meanings in the Old Testament text. A considerable number of his followers took up his agenda and made it a primary activity until the late 1760s.

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[55] See for example, A. Sutcliffe, *Judaism and Enlightenment* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). See also J. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment, Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (Oxford University Press, 2002) for his putting Spinozism at the heart of the Enlightenment debate. Israel argues that Spinoza's preoccupation with the Old Testament to question revelation and divine providence profoundly influenced the intellectual history of the eighteenth century.

[56] See D. B. Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment in an English Key, Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000): pp. 23-57.

The contribution made by the Hutchinsonians and not merely Hutchinson — positive or negative — to Hebrew studies, as well as the antecedents of this contribution, requires further study. There are not many historians who have dealt with this aspect of Hutchinsonianism. David Katz, in two studies on Hutchinsonianism, points out the importance of Hutchinsonians as the promoters of Hebraic studies, drawing attention to Hutchinson himself as a Hebraist.[57] Katz argues that the Hutchinsonians' concern with the original text of the Old Testament deserves attention, whatever their motivation may have been. Before Katz, the Hutchinsonian interest in Hebrew had been seen only in the context of the cosmology it produced. More generally, the place of Hutchinsonianism in the history of English biblical exegesis has been acknowledged as important, but hardly investigated.[58] Early Hutchinsonians urged revision of received biblical texts. Later Hutchinsonians were distinguished commentarists. George Horne, with his commentary on the Book of Psalms, was one of the most popular exegetes of his age. The fact that the Jews' pointing of the Hebrew text appalled Hutchinsonians is not under dispute, but Hutchinsonian mistrust of the Jewish Talmudic tradition has not been investigated. One obvious reason for undertaking such an investigation is the fact that Jewish Massoretic traditions were seen by Christians as a conspiratorial effort to hide the promised Christian truth in the Old Testament. Hutchinsonians were not unique in this attitude, nor was their biblicalism uncommon. On the other

[57] D. S. Katz, 'Moses's Principia,': p. 211; and 'The Hutchinsonians and Hebraic Fundamentalism in Eighteenth Century England,' in D. S. Katz and Jonathan I. Israel (eds.), *Sceptics, Millenarians and Jews* (Leiden: Brill, 1990): pp. 237–256.

[58] G. Rowell, '"Church Principles" and "Protestant Kempism": Some Theological Fore-runners of the Tractarians,' in P. Vaiss, (ed.), *From Oxford to the People: Reconsidering Newman and the Oxford Movement* (Leominster: Fowler Wright Books, 1996): pp. 17-59, p. 22.

hand, it was the Hutchinsonians who initiated a long lasting controversy on the etymology of certain words in Hebrew, which lasted for decades with a considerable publicity. This period has been virtually ignored by the historians. The so-called Hutchinsonian controversy should be incorporated for an understanding of how Hutchinsonians publicized their Hebraic method of exegesis and the reactions it drew.

1.7. Agenda

Fundamental to my own approach to Hutchinsonianism is the assertion that Hutchinsonians need to be looked at generation by generation. Writings on Hutchinsonianism have been greatly inhibited by regarding the phenomenon as a single one, lacking in change. Thackeray's statement that 'Hutchinson's ideas commanded among more conservative Anglicans throughout the eighteenth century' characterizes much of the thinking on Hutchinsonianism. While it cannot be said to be untrue, it obscures the great variety of Hutchinsonian thought.[59] It is necessary to distinguish both between Hutchinson and his followers and among the followers themselves. As a preliminary step, it may be helpful to divide Hutchinsonians into different generations, with Hutchinson and his contemporaries as the first generation, the Oxford Circle and their academic contemporaries as the second, and the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Hutchinsonians as the third. The investigation of these different generations will be performed twofold: first by differentiating one generation from another — in other words, a chronological division — and secondly, by pointing out the differences

[59] A. Thackeray, *An Essay on Newtonian Matter Theory and the Developments of Chemistry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970): p. 246.

within each generation itself. Such a method will help to answer the most neglected questions in the histories of this movement. The primary questions are: in what ways did Hutchinsonianism evolve generation by generation; how did members of the same generation differ from one other in their reception of Hutchinson's ideas; and, most importantly, what remains as the core of Hutchinsonianism after such a long period of change, and such diversity between groups and within the generations themselves?

Accordingly, Hutchinsonianism will be examined chronologically, beginning of course with John Hutchinson himself, perhaps the most ignored element in histories of the movement which bear his name. Although Hutchinsonianism does not derive solely from Hutchinson, a personal account of Hutchinson is necessary in order to understand the historical development of the movement. With this in mind, Hutchinson's own writings will be a constant focus. Hutchinson's relationship with John Woodward will be examined as well; their surviving correspondence and the histories of John Woodward, although scanty, do give hints as to how Hutchinson placed himself and his contemporaries in the intellectual environment of the early eighteenth century.[60] As to his cosmology and epistemology, Hutchinson's own writings suggest better than any other source the influences upon him. Hutchinson's famous anti-Newtonianism will be examined as well, specifically the grounds for Hutchinson's rejection of Newton when he came to explain the physical world.[61] Such an investigation is necessary for an understanding of how his followers received his anti-Newtonianism.

[60] See *Works*, vol. 2. This text includes criticism of John Woodward and his Newtonian tendencies in explaining the reformation of the strata after the Flood. For Woodward's account of John Hutchinson, see *Letters to Sir H. Sloane*. British Library. Sloane 4044, ff. 155–156.

[61] Hutchinson's anti-Newtonianism can be traced in *Works*, vol. 5. and vol. 6.

Hutchinson's reasons for choosing the Old Testament in its original, unpointed text will similarly be explained through his writings.[62] The choice was not eccentric, nor was he the only one to deal with the unpointed text among his contemporaries.

The Hutchinsonian use of divine analogy as a tool for explaining the cosmos, and Hutchinson's construction of the trinity of Fire, Light and Spirit will be examined in the context of eighteenth-century popular theories of analogy and the various strands that influenced his own theory.[63]

The early followers of Hutchinson are necessarily part of this discussion, for they had the advantage of being contemporaries of Hutchinson, and were active participants in the overall projection as well as reception of Hutchinson as their mentor. The first generation of Hutchinsonians found John Hutchinson no easier to understand than have modern historians. His contemporaries most probably received a continuous feedback from Hutchinson in terms of his ideas on cosmology. In fact, and understandably, this first generation remained closest to the thought of the master. This is particularly true of writers such as Julius Bate, Robert Spearman, and the senior Catcott. Their work may be divided into two broad categories. First, they were concerned to provide the necessary tools for future Hutchinsonians, most importantly an edition of Hutchinson's own works, a task undertaken by Bate and Spearman.[64] Secondly, they were

[62] *Works*, vol. 7.
[63] *Works*, vol. 1.
[64] A small pamphlet controversy attended the publication of the *Works*. Bate and Spearman prepared their first proposal for subscription to print Hutchinson's works in 1747, followed by a pamphlet called *A Modest Apology for those of the Superior Clergy* in 1748 by an anonymous writer. *A Modest Apology* was written against the publication of Hutchinson's collected works. Spearman wrote *A Defence of Mr. Hutchinson's plan* the same year. Finally *Works* were published in 1748–49.

concerned to offer defences and expositions of Hutchinson's thought.[65] However, there were differences in emphasis between Hutchinson and his followers as well as among the followers. This was inevitable: each had his own interests and reasons for becoming a disciple of Hutchinson.

A similar problem arises with later Hutchinsonians too. M. Neve and R. Porter point out the fidelity of Catcott junior to Hutchinson's own views, but at the same time they draw attention to the distinctive nature of his work occasioned by its geological subject matter.[66] Surviving correspondence provides evidence for the variety of interests of the followers, the ways they perceived Hutchinson, and the ways he influenced them.

Among the followers of Hutchinson, the senior and junior Catcotts left a valuable correspondence and deserve great attention in this respect. The Catcott Correspondence in Bristol Reference Library contains these two Hutchinsonians' correspondence both with the founder John Hutchinson and with other Hutchinsonians, from Julius Bate to George Horne and William Jones.[67] This correspondence, which is valuable for the simple fact that there is no other known source including nearly every generation of Hutchinsonians in one piece, supplies important information about the differences between individual Hutchinsonians.

In the early stages of the movement, there were also more individualistic 'Hutchinsonians', such as Duncan Forbes in Scotland. Forbes's Hutchinsonianism was studied in a biographical work by George

[65] Julius Bate, *A Defence of Mr. Hutchinson's Tenets in Philosophy and Divinity: In Answer to the Objections of Mr. Simon Berrington* (London, 1751) is another work by Bate displaying his interpretation of John Hutchinson's ideas. History of religion is the main issue in this work. See, for further exemplification, John Dove, *Vindication of the Hebrew Scriptures* (London, 1771).
[66] Neve and Porter, 'Alexander Catcott': p. 39.
[67] Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence.* B 26063.

Menary as early as 1936.[68] Menary, although he devoted a whole chapter to Forbes's intellectual activities, could not explain his interest in Hutchinson's ideas- nor has anyone else.

Hutchinson's construction of a reconciliation between biblical history and natural history, as against the discordances coming out of Newtonianism, was appreciated in various ways by different Hutchinsonians, though the way John Hutchinson handled Newtonian cosmology in the context of his readings of the Old Testament did not necessarily determine every other Hutchinsonian's way of dealing with the same subject. The Catcotts were loyal followers of John Hutchinson in this respect, and their correspondence is a useful primary source for examining the conventional historiography on Hutchinsonians, and the social and cultural aspects of Hutchinsonianism. Questions such as how Hutchinsonianism was introduced to academic circles, or how Hutchinsonians defined themselves, and what were the 'others' they defined themselves against in order to underline their identities can also be answered using surviving correspondence and pamphlet literature. The Catcotts, father and son respectively, to some extent are representatives of the first and second generations of Hutchinsonians. Their correspondence is a valuable tool in analysing the reception of Hutchinson's ideas and the later developments and possible deviations from early Hutchinsonianism.

What other eighteenth-century intellectuals thought about Hutchinsonians is important as well, and Hutchinsonian involvement in the debates and ideas of eighteenth-century intellectual circles will be a part of

[68] G. Menary, *The Life and Letters of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Lord President of the Court of Session 1685-1747* (London: Alexander House & Co., 1936).

my account. The way Hutchinsonians were mentioned in the press and periodical publications of the time also helps paint a fuller picture. Especially after the 1750s, the issues of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Edinburgh Literary Review* and the *Monthly Review* frequently published reviews of Hutchinsonian pamphlets.

The third generation of Hutchinsonians shows different characteristics. William Jones, George Horne, William Stevens and William Van Mildert have been regarded as members of this later phase of the Hutchinsonian movement.[69] William Van Mildert has been regarded as almost the last representative of the movement.[70] A survey of the interests of these people and their approach to Hutchinsonianism will be made in order to understand the need to change and the ways in which the change came into being. It will become clear, in Chapter 5 of this thesis, that Hutchinsonians became increasingly aware that they had to dispense with parts of the system, such as Hutchinson's Hebrew method and aggressive anti-Newtonianism.

By the end of the eighteenth century, it will be argued, Hutchinsonianism had lost its edge. The compact system of thought, once some of its branches were discarded, was always likely to be reduced to a more general kind of orthodoxy. Chapter 6 of the thesis will display the conscious effort of late eighteenth-century Hutchinsonians to become so. The increasing conservatism in the British Isles, due to the revolutionary scare from France will be investigated hand in hand with the Hutchinsonian effort

[69] See Nockles, *Oxford Movement*: pp. 203-4; Young, *Religion and Enlightenment*: pp. 138-47.
[70] E. Varley, *The Last of the Prince Bishops. William Van Mildert and the High Church movement of the Early Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): p. 7.

to unite with mainstream orthodoxy. This will highlight the reasons behind the downfall of the movement.

CHAPTER 2

THE TIMES, THE NEED AND THE MEN

Let us begin by setting out the threats to Trinitarian Christianity in the eighteenth century that the Hutchinsonian system was designed to answer. Post-revolutionary period English thought will be our starting point for this. Latitudinarian Whigs who were members 'of the Church of England anxious to minimise dogmatic and ecclesiological differences with other Protestant communions'[71] and who dominated the political scene after the Glorious Revolution were broadly in favour of religious toleration or convinced of its necessity. The years between 1690 and 1760 represented, in part as consequence of this Whig, Latitudinarian supremacy, the high tide of heterodox thinking.

The important figures who emerged in this period as the pioneers of deism in England were John Toland, Matthew Tindal and the third earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper. Shaftesbury created a controversy with the publication of his *Inquiry Concerning Virtue* (1698), which had pantheistic implications in identifying 'God with the harmony of nature'. It was also controversial in its denial of a future state of rewards and punishments.[72] The works of Shaftesbury and the others mentioned above came to be crucial in defining the relationship between a radical attitude towards both the political and religious establishments and to its

[71] N. Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): p. 336.
[72] B. Williams, *The Whig Supremacy, 1714-1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992): p. 84.

philosophical underpinnings. For the 1690s, the definitive study was Toland's work *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696), which sparked off the long lasting Deist Controversy.[73] The 1730s were marked by Tindal's attack on revealed religion with his work *Christianity as Old as Creation* (1730). 'The controversy between the late deists and their clerical opponents continued well into the 1740s and 50s but the crucial years were from the later 1690s to the early 1730s.'[74] This period, as Rivers pointed out, was crucial to Hutchinsonianism, as it grew largely in the wake of these varieties of heterodox thinking.[75] The challenges to Anglicanism can be explained in different ways. I do not intend to provide an overall survey of heterodox thinking for this period. I will instead try to highlight some aspects of intellectual enquiry involved in this period between the 1690s and the 1730s to provide a background for the purposes of this study.

It would be safe to say that the Bible was at the centre stage of all. The questions that heterodoxy — deists, unitarians, freethinkers, anti-trinitarians of all sorts — raised against the authority of scripture, its authorship, its transmission and its conflicts with the new science in the light of extra-biblical evidence hit at the heart of Christian belief and especially Protestant Christian belief. It presented a particular threat to Protestant trinitarian religion.[76] Not only were the doctrines of Christianity, especially the Trinity, attacked, but also the Protestant biblical basis of revelation and

[73] See R.E. Sullivan, *John Toland and the Deist Controversy, A Study in Adaptations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982) for an authoritative account of the controversy.
[74] I. Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660-1780, Volume II, Shaftesbury to Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): p. 13.
[75] *Ibid.*
[76] For a competent survey of biblical criticism in England during this period see, H.G. Reventlow, *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World* (London: SCM Press, 1984).

the essentials of Christian history were questioned as well. The assault on the authority of Scripture as revelation in particular threatened the religious establishment. Many of the Anglican clergy felt that the deist assault shook the foundations of their existence, resting as they did on the authority and narrative provided by the Bible.

The type of Christianity that inspired those who took an interest in natural theology in post-revolutionary England was one that undermined the authority of, and at times seemed to threaten the very existence of, the Established Church. The Bangorian controversy exemplified the challenge to the Church hierarchy and to the authority of the priesthood and produced responses from orthodox Anglicans for decades. When Benjamin Hoadly, bishop of Bangor published his *A Plain Account* the replies from orthodoxy flooded in. William Law and Daniel Waterland wrote the ablest treatises against Hoadly in this controversy, defending the Eucharist and the Church hierarchy.[77]

The New Science had been institutionalised in 1662 by the establishment of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences, which was 'the main forum for the Newtonian cause.'[78] The well-known figures of the New Science were favourites of the Whig Establishment in the late seventeenth

[77] Benjamin Hoadly, *A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, not drawn from or founded on Scripture* (London, 1737); William Law, *A Demonstration of the Errors of a late book called A Plain Account of the Nature and end of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (London, 1737), Daniel Waterland, *Review of the Doctrine of the Eucharist as laid down in Scripture and antiquity* (Cambridge, 1738). See also R. L. Warner, 'Early eighteenth century low churchmanship: the Glorious Revolution to the Bangorian controversy' (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Reading, 1999).

[78] A.C. Kors, *Encyclopaedia of Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): p. 32. L. Stewart, *The Rise of Public Science: Rhetoric, Technology, and Natural Philosophy in Newtonian Britain, 1660-1750* examines the diffusion of Newtonianism into the layers of intellectual life in England. See also M. Hunter, 'The Crown, the Public and the New Science, 1689-1702,' *Notes and Records of the Royal Society London* 43 (1989): pp. 99-116.

century.[79] Apart from their fashionability there was a certain awareness among them that they were walking on broken glass in respect of the potentially irreligious connotations of their increasing empiricism. The members of the Royal Society started publishing apologetic pamphlets explaining how the aims and practices of the Royal Society and the ideals of the New Science were compatible with the religious establishment.[80]

Among all the factions of heterodox and potentially heterodox thinking in England, the Newtonians were most associated by Hutchinsonians with a threat to the religious establishment.[81] Anti-trinitarianism of all sorts was a danger to the establishment, but Arianism gained the most notorious reputation as both an ancient, well-documented heresy and one which could easily associate itself with a powerful, new cosmology: that of which Isaac Newton was the architect. Newtonianism could be seen to be at the heart of the assault on both the religious and political establishment. It did not take too long for heterodoxy to associate Newtonianism with itself as a philosophical backing for anti-trinitarianism. Samuel Clarke (1675-1729) with his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712) extensively used Newtonian arguments to dispute the Trinity. He went further by arguing that Arianism could be found in scripture.[82] Newtonianism

[79] See also J. Gascoigne, *The Holy Alliance, the rise and diffusion of Newtonian natural philosophy and latitudinarian theology within Cambridge from the Restoration to the accession of George II* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1981). See also B. Shapiro, 'Latitudinarianism and Science in Seventeenth-Century England' in Charles Webster (ed.), *The Intellectual Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1974): pp. 286-316.

[80] For a discussion of seventeenth-century tension between science and religion, see Derya Gurses, *Satanic Ingredients in Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft Debate* (Unpublished MA dissertation, Bilkent University, 1997).

[81] See M. Hunter, *Science and the Shape of Orthodoxy: Intellectual Challenge in late Seventeenth-Century Britain* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995): pp. 11-12.

[82] On Clarke, see J.P. Ferguson, *Dr. Samuel Clarke, An Eighteenth-Century Heretic* (Kineton: Roundwood Press, 1974).

was thus religiously suspect, but it also apparently challenged both scriptural cosmology and traditional Aristotelian mechanics: 'Commitment to experiment also implied a rejection of biblical doctrine and Aristotelian philosophy.'[83]

The period between the 1690s and the 1730s was a period of increasing anti-Newtonianism on English soil.[84] Scientists and theologians alike found it difficult to accept notions like the vacuum, action at a distance and gravity. These seemed to undermine the glory, omnipotence and transcendence of God. Newtonian scientists like John Woodward, William Whiston, Samuel Clarke and most of all Newton himself were attacked on religious grounds through the accusation that their cosmology was not compatible to the Biblical account of the universe.[85]

Orthodox Anglican critics of Newtonianism were in a sense, right to perceive it as an assault. The discourse of Enlightenment in England, which of course included the New Science in general and Newtonianism in particular, was, as Pocock puts it, a polemic against the fundamentals of the existence of the Church of England:

> we…can never cease from emphasizing, the extent to which all discourse of toleration, liberty and enlightenment was a polemic against the orthodox theology of Christ's divinity, against the Trinity and Incarnation, the Council of Nicea, the Athanasian Creed, the Gospel according to St. John and the doctrine of the Word made flesh.[86]

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[83] Kors, *Encyclopaedia*: p. 177.
[84] See M.V. Byrne, *Alternative Cosmologies in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1998) for an authoritative account of different versions of anti-Newtonianism in England.
[85] S. Mandelbrote, 'Newton and the eighteenth-century Christianity' in B. Cohen and G.E. Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Newton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): pp. 409-431.
[86] J.G.A. Pocock, 'The definitions of Orthodoxy,' in R.D.Lund (ed.), *The Margins of Orthodoxy, Heterodox Writing and Cultural Response, 1660-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): p. 50.

The question here to be asked is what were the ways in which orthodoxy coped with this challenge. Doctrines of Anglicanism like 'belief in the Trinity, *de jure divino* episcopacy and monarchy' were shaken by the radical attacks on the Established Church as historians have illustrated.[87] There have appeared also studies that intend to highlight the resistance of Anglicanism to surrender and the ways in which orthodoxy dealt with the rise of religious heterodoxy in the later part of the eighteenth century.[88] In the Hutchinsonian case it can be argued that they not only rose to the challenge, but also claimed that they had reformed the religion through their systematic trinitarianism.

The controversies that took place during this period exhibit not only the tension between two factions. They also demonstrate something very revealing about orthodoxy Anglicanism. The efforts shown by the orthodox resistance were more than a mere attempt to preserve the status quo. They were instead dynamic efforts to rise to the challenge provided by the radical thought of the time. So orthodoxy, as part of its response, questioned the strength, and at times more the comprehensive nature, of reason so far as it applied to all possible components of the intellectual debate.

A range of fideist thinkers came to the fore with their responses. Peter Browne (d.1735), provost of Trinity College, Dublin, entered the arena with his answer to Toland's *Christianity* in 1697. Browne strongly argued against the authority of reason for attaining knowledge of the Divine. He suggested that we may have only an 'analogical' knowledge

[87] J.A.I. Champion, *Pillars of the Priestcraft Shaken, The Church of England and its Enemies, 1660-1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): p. 225.
[88] P.B. Nockles, *Orthodox Movement in Context, Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760-1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See Also I. Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment*, vol. 2: pp. 7-50.

through revelation.[89] Charles Leslie (1650-1722), Non-Juror and controversialist, came up with *A Short and Easy Method with the Deists* in 1698 and argued for the Church hierarchy and its authority. This work was to be a reference point for orthodox thinkers for many years to come.[90]

The clash between the rationalist and fideist wings of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century religion was exemplified by the ongoing pamphlet wars on the nature of the Trinity. There were two different trinitarian controversies. The First Trinitarian Controversy in the 1690s arose when Bishop George Bull (1634–1710) became the iconic figure set against the anti-trinitarianism of the continental Arians. Bull's approach, in his famous work *Defensio Fidei Nicenae*, was primarily historical and based on the investigation of the Nicene and Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Church.[91] The orthodox side of the First Trinitarian Controversy reinforced an entire theological system directed towards a defence of the Trinity against all unitarian threats.

Later, the Second Trinitarian Controversy was the one with which the early followers of Hutchinson identified. This controversy, also called the Arian Controversy, developed in the second and third decades of the eighteenth century, having been instigated by Samuel Clarke and William Whiston.[92] To a certain extent mixed in with this was controversy over Tindal's 1730 publication, *Christianity as Old as Creation*, and his argument that revelation should be verified by human reason, because otherwise it was

[89] Peter Browne, *Letter in Answer to a Book entitled Christianity not Mysterious* (London, 1697).
[90] Charles Leslie, *A Short and Easy Method with the Deists* (London, 1710)
[91] See Robert Nelson, *The Life of Dr. George Bull* (London, 1713).
[92] J. Hay Colligan, *The Arian Movement in England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1913). See also L. Stewart 'Samuel Clarke, Newtonianism and the Factions of Post-Revolutionary England' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42 (1980): pp. 53-72.

either void or not a part of Christianity. This attracted much criticism- 150 replies over the first ten years.[93] Daniel Waterland needs to be mentioned as the 'hammer of the Arians' in this continuing controversy. Waterland attacked the deist Matthew Tindal with *Scripture Vindicated* (1730), which according to Leslie Stephen 'marked the culmination of the deist controversy.'[94] Waterland also attacked Clarke and Newton for their anti-trinitarianism.[95]

Among those who also published against Tindal was William Law. Law also took on Tindal's *Christianity as Old as Creation*. Law did not deny that Christianity was as old as Creation, but argued that our knowledge of it was due not to reason but to revelation.[96] Browne continued his attack against Toland by publishing *The Procedure* in 1728.[97] Joseph Butler's *Analogy* should also be noted as a response to this heterodox thinking.[98]

In the context drawn above the place of Hutchinsonians deserves attention. They not only rose to the challenge provided by heterodoxy, but also claimed that they had arrived at a self-sufficient alternative to the overall assault on orthodoxy. While I shall deal with the details of the Hutchinsonian system in Chapter Three, it is important to realise the context of the design of that system and that, in its design, the Hutchinsonian defence of Trinitarian Christianity, as we shall see, opened up new fronts in the battle.

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[93] See also D. Berman and S. Lalor, 'The Supression of Christianity as Old As Creation' *Notes and Queries* 229 (31) (1984): pp. 3-6.
[94] *DNB*. For Waterland see, Robert T. Holtby, *Daniel Waterland 1683-1740: A Study in Eighteenth Century Orthodoxy* (Carlisle: Thurnam, 1966): pp. 12-49.
[95] Mandelbrote, 'Newton and eighteenth-century Christianity': pp. 413-14.
[96] William Law, *The Case of Reason, or Natural Religion fairly…stated. In Answer to a book entitled Christianity as Old Creation* (London, 1731).
[97] Peter Browne, *The Procedure, Extent and Limits of Human Understanding* (London, 1728).
[98] Joseph Butler, *Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (London, 1736).

Like other orthodox Trinitarians, Hutchinsonians viewed the period as one categorised by an assault on Trinitarian Christianity. Enlightenment thought, as early Hutchinsonians saw it, was not only closely associated with religious heterodoxy, but was at the very root of anti-trinitarianism. In any discussion of the early Hutchinsonians one should bear in mind that the primary concern of Hutchinson's followers was to understand and promote Hutchinson's trinitarian agenda. Accordingly, their attack was directed against all sorts of anti-trinitarian tendencies, and the bases of those tendencies. The denial of the authority of scriptural revelation was motivated by a desire to deny the Trinity as far as the Hutchinsonians were concerned. So, accordingly, Hutchinson's critique of John Toland alongside Newton was followed by Forbes's critique of Matthew Tindal together with Samuel Clarke. Benjamin Holloway took up the flag from Hutchinson and attacked Benjamin Hoadly, and also expressed his dissatisfaction with Newtonianism. Duncan Forbes regarded the deist literature produced by Matthew Tindal as at one with anti-trinitarianism and treated them both as a single source of infidelity. His pamphlet opened with a clear indication that it was written against all those ideas which 'flow from a settled disbelief and contempt of Revelation.'[99]

The Hutchinsonian defence was geared up against all possible assaults on the doctrines of trinitarian Anglicanism. The Trinity had to be defended, but the Hutchinsonians also had to rise to the challenge provided by Newtonian science, by arguing for a cosmology that was compatible and indeed impregnated with the Trinity. The overall assault had to be tackled

[99] Forbes, *Letter to a Bishop*, p. 3.

with a system that maintained the authority of scripture over cosmology. The Hutchinsonian trinitarian system was designed to serve these purposes. It is now appropriate to have a look at the men who brought Hutchinsonianism into the eighteenth-century intellectual world.

2.1. John Hutchinson (1674-1737)

Without Hutchinson, there could have been no Hutchinsonianism, or at least not with that name, though he was responding to the same threats as the other defenders of orthodox, threats to trinitarian Protestantism. He was an autodidact and there is no known record stating that other members of his family had any involvement with academia or learned subjects. Hutchinson was born in the year 1674 in Spennithorne, Yorkshire. His father was a yeoman of Wensleydale in the North Riding. Hutchinson's early interest in geology may have originated from the time spent in the northern collieries as a steward.[100] According to the account of John Hutchinson in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, 'A gentleman, happening to take lodgings in his father's house, took a fancy to the lad, and offered to stay till his education was completed. From this admirable boarder, Hutchinson learned some mathematics.' Hutchinson himself later informed his readers somewhat pompously about this period of education in his *A Treatise of Power Essential and Mechanical*, revealing both his self-confidence and, in his reference to Newton, his aggressiveness:

> After the business of grammar school, I began as early as he [Newton] with mathematics, mechanics, and observations, and had a tutor at home with me, who was, perhaps, as great a

[100] E. Churton, *Memoir of Joshua Watson* (Oxford and London: J. H. and J. Parker, 1861), p. 39.

> mathematician as either of those whose books he studied; and taught me, as much as I could see any use for, either upon the earth or in the heavens, without poisoning me with any false notions fathered upon the mathematics.[101]

Few sources shed light on Hutchinson's early years before he came into the household of the Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset (1662-1748), but the available evidence indicates that Hutchinson became steward to Mr. Bathurst of Skutterskelf in Yorkshire in 1694. Entering Somerset's household gave Hutchinson the opportunity to meet John Woodward, the duke's physician. Levine, who wrote a biography of John Woodward explains how they met:

> 'One of his [Woodward's] assistants was a young man, "brought up from his youth in Mines" named John Hutchinson. As steward to the Duke of Somerset, he travelled to London about 1700 and fell under the spell of Woodward's ideas. He soon began to assist the Doctor in his collections and gathered materials for a pamphlet of his own on the observations he had made in the year 1706.'[102]

The Duke of Somerset, who had been chancellor of the University of Cambridge during William III's reign, had an interest in Hutchinson's studies.[103] Hutchinson was 26 years old and soon started working for Woodward, which certainly encouraged his interest in geology. As a professor of physics and a member of the Royal Society, Woodward was famous for his studies of fossils. Woodward contributed to the controversy about the relationship between geology and the book of Genesis by subscribing to the tradition of reading natural history in accordance with the Bible. This required a detailed study of geology to accompany the biblical

[101] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 236.
[102] Joseph M. Levine, *Dr. Woodward's Shield, History, Science and Satire in Augustan England* (London: University of California Press, 1976): p. 42.
[103] A.A. Locke, *The Seymour Family, History and Romance* (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1911): p. 156.

account of the history of the cosmos. Hutchinson helped Woodward to collect fossils and prepared a pamphlet entitled *Observations made by John Hutchinson mostly in the year 1706.* This pamphlet contains the results of Hutchinson's examinations of rock structures and fossils. The letters from Hutchinson to Woodward in the Bodleian Library consist of about twelve letters written by Hutchinson in the year 1706, from different parts of the country including Cornwall, the Lake District, and Yorkshire. They include his observations about the rock and land structures.[104] These letters seem to have served Woodward's purposes well. Talking about Hutchinson, in a letter to the Swiss naturalist Johann Jacob Scheuchzer (1672-1733) dated 10 September 1706, Woodward wrote: 'He has made me a vast return.'[105]

Hutchinson terminated his partnership with Woodward by demanding but not receiving the return of his fossils.[106] According to Woodward's account, Hutchinson travelled to Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Devonshire, and Cornwall to perform land studies. He delivered letters Woodward gave him, recommending him to friends whose estates included mines. Woodward acknowledged that Hutchinson sent him letters mentioning places where some of the ores were found and noted the disturbingly changing content of Hutchinson's letters.

> He had in his journey, shaken off the miner, and started up at once into a philosopher, displaying what he calls, a most sublime philosophy concerning these Ores, and their formation at the Deluge, soaring at things he could not reach and neglecting those in his power.[107]

[104] Oxford Bodleian Library, Western MSS. Gough Wales 8: ff. 4–25.
[105] John Woodward to Scheuchzer, 10 September 1706, quoted in J. M. Levine, *Dr. Woodward's Shield*: p. 309.
[106] See *Letters to H. Sloane*. British Library. Sloane 4062: f. 31 for Hutchinson's demand to take his metal samples back from Woodward.
[107] *Letters to H. Sloane*. British Library. MS Sloane 4044: f. 156.

Woodward argued that Hutchinson's philosophy was not 'in the least intelligible either to me, or any one else, that has ever read his letters.'[108] Woodward acknowledged that Hutchinson's arguments against his *Natural History of the Earth* and his claim on the fossil collection distressed him greatly, and added that he was so affected by this experience that he never again employed any one as he had Hutchinson.[109]

Hutchinson's criticism of Woodward came from differences of thought on how to perform science in accordance with the biblical account. The major narratives to be confirmed by geology at the time were the Creation, the Flood and the reformation of the earth after the Flood. Woodward had already published tracts on these matters and had received a considerable number of criticisms.[110] As early as 1697, John Arbuthnot (1667-1735), later physician to Queen Anne, argued against Woodward:

> The compilers of theories should have more regard to Moses' Revelation, which surpasses all the accounts of philosophers as much in wisdom as it doth in authority.[111]

Although Woodward had a genuine interest and belief in the accuracy of the biblical account, some of his interpretations were undeniably

[108] *Ibid.*
[109] The letter is not dated.
[110] John Woodward, *An Essay towards the Natural History of the Earth* (London, 1695). Woodward was criticised before the publication of *Moses's Principia.* John Arbuthnot published a pamphlet titled *An Examination of Dr. Woodward's Account of the Deluge, &c With a Comparison between Steno's philosophy and Doctor's, In the Case of Marine Bodies Dug Out of the Earth* in 1697, which was a severe criticism of Woodward's interpretation of the Flood. For a continental critique of Woodward, see also Dr Camerarius from Tubingen's treatise *Elias Camerarii…Dissertationes Taurinenses Epistolicae, Physico-Medicae Continentes Annotationes in Varia Modernorum, Dn. De Noues Cumprimus, ac. Dn. Woodwardi Scripta atque Experimenta* (Tubingae, 1712).
[111] Quoted in R. Olson, 'Tory–High Church Opposition to Science and Scientism in the Eighteenth Century: The Works of John Arbuthnot, Jonathan Swift, and Samuel Johnson,' in J. Burke (ed.) *The Uses of Science in the Age of Newton* (London: University of California Press, 1983): pp. 171–204, p. 176. For more on John Arbuthnot, see L.M. Beattie, *John Arbuthnot* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935) For more on his fideistic stand see also E. Shoesmith 'The Continental Controversy over Arbuthnot's argument for divine providence' *Historia Mathematica* 14 (2) (1987): pp. 133-46.

Newtonian. He suggested, for instance, 'that gravity had disposed the fossils and arranged the strata in their present positions in the earth' following the Flood.[112] Woodward went so far as to argue that the suspension of gravity was the reason for the Deluge.[113] Hutchinson rejected Woodward's method of reading the Bible from nature:

> I am not ploughing with an ox and an ass together, part of revelation, and part of atheism; I find they will not join anymore than his fire and water.[114]

Hutchinson soon realized that he had differences of opinion with the fashionable part of the academic world. He was introduced to the members of the Royal Society but, after interrogating them, realized that to fit in he would need to subscribe to the Newtonian vacuum theory in his explanation of natural phenomena. He refused to do this.[115] These incidents were indications that he was not going to compromise with either Woodward or academia in his system of thought. Hutchinson resigned his stewardship, 'to the annoyance of the duke [of Somerset].' The Duke of Somerset:

> upon hearing his motive, appointed him riding purveyor, being himself master of the horse to George I. As purveyor he had a good house, 200 l. a year, and a few duties.[116]

This was the beginning of the work that was to take up the rest of his life. In 1724, he published his first exposition of his ideas, Moses's Principia. His Essay Towards a Natural History of the Bible followed in 1725.

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[112] Levine, *Dr. Woodward's Shield*: p. 42. See also R. Porter, *The Making of Science of Geology in Britain, 1660–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) for his discussion on how Woodward held Newtonian views similar to Halley, Keil and Whiston in his explanation of the Deluge.
[113] Porter, *The Making of Science of Geology*: p. 39.
[114] *Works*, vol. 1: p. 119.
[115] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 236.
[116] *DNB*.

Hutchinson made it clear in both parts of Moses's Principia that he was not merely trying to refute Woodward. Nevertheless, Woodward was the primary target of the first part of Moses's Principia. Hutchinson later wrote:

> I threw out the first part of Moses's Principia, in 1724, wherein I set aside his pretended discoveries, ridiculed gravity and all his performance, showed how he had stole and distributed my observations, and intended to rob me of my collection.[117]

Hutchinson rarely thereafter dropped his harsh criticism of the figureheads of academia throughout his writings.

From the first publication in 1724 until his last in 1737, Hutchinson published fifteen works, all based on the authority of the Bible.[118] The progress of science, argued Hutchinson, could not claim authority over religion. It was the other way round. Religion, however, should be founded on the absolute authority of the Bible. Hutchinson's works are efforts to liberate religion from extra-biblical influences such as tradition, the teachings of the Church Fathers and the practices of the Church authorities. By providing a self-sufficient authority to consult in intellectual matters, Hutchinson thought he could prevent pantheistic speculation. Even in his first publications, he showed his ambition of challenging the foundations of Newtonian physics. *Moses's Principia* (1724), *Power Essential and Mechanical* (1732) and *Glory or Gravity* (1733) were written for the purpose of showing that cosmologies based on extra-biblical reasoning were bound to be wrong. His resentment over the priority given to scientific reasoning

[117] Works, vol. 5: p. 245.
[118] Hutchinson's *Works*, collected in twelve volumes by his disciples Robert Spearman and Julius Bate in 1748. For a chronological list of his publications see Appendix.

before revelation eventually led to Hutchinson's departure from scientific investigation altogether.

2.2. Julius Bate (1711-1771) and Robert Spearman (1703-1761)

Julius Bate and Robert Spearman were responsible for publicizing Hutchinson's *Works* to most of the subsequent followers and sympathizers of Hutchinson. It is necessary to mention these two men in the same context, since although they published separately, the long process of editing Hutchinson's works made them almost siblings of Hutchinson's teaching. Historians have frequently doubted the Hutchinsonianism of Duncan Forbes and Benjamin Holloway, but there is no uncertainty that Bate and Spearman were dedicated followers of Hutchinson.

Julius Bate was probably John Hutchinson's most devoted disciple. He received his B.A. and M.A. from St John's College, Cambridge.[119] Hutchinson, in one of his letters to Alexander Stopford Catcott (1692-1749),[120] mentioned the story of how Bate had been given a living by Charles Seymour, the sixth Duke of Somerset, to carry on his studies with Hutchinson. While Hutchinson was dining the with the duke:

> Some discourse arose which moved him to give a living to Mr. Bate aged but 25, one of the cleverest young men we have, of about 200 pounds a year. I went into the country to fetch him and got a cold.[121]

[119] *DNB.*
[120] I will use Catcott Senior to distinguish Alexander Stopford Catcott from his son, Alexander Catcott, who I will refer to as Catcott Junior.
[121] John Hutchinson to Catcott Senior, 18 November 1735. *Catcott Correspondence*, Bristol Central Library. B 26063: f. 13.

Although there is no known correspondence between Hutchinson and Bate, the latter's communication with other followers after Hutchinson's death provides evidence to show how close he was to Hutchinson.

Bate's publications and his contribution to debates involving Hutchinsonians will be examined in detail in the following chapters. His most important effort in the service of the cause must be mentioned here: his collaboration with Robert Spearman in editing and publishing Hutchinson's collected *Works*. There are valid arguments that the publication of the *Works* stimulated an interest in Hutchinson and Hutchinsonianism among many academics of the time. The increasing involvement with the movement of those at, or connected with, the Oxford University after the 1750s is partially, though only partially, due to Bate's and Spearman's edition of Hutchinson's lifetime work. Spearman as well is known primarily for his collaboration with Bate in this matter. Although Spearman's independent publications are limited to just two, he deserves to be treated as a devoted and contemporary follower of Hutchinson.

Robert Spearman was born in Durham in 1703 and died in County Durham on 20 October 1761. He was the first person to write a biography of Hutchinson, which appeared in *Floyds Bibliotheca* in 1760.[122] In 1765, a supplement to Hutchinson's works prepared by John Parkhurst included another study of Hutchinson's life by Spearman.[123] His two Hutchinsonian

[122] *DNB*.
[123]Robert Spearman, *A Supplement to the Works of John Hutchinson … being an index and* explanation *of all Hebrew Words cited in the second part of his Moses's Principia. With additional Remarks, by … R. Spearman …To this work is prefixed, Mr. Hutchinson's life, written by Mr. Spearman* [edited by J(ohn) P(arkhurst).] (London, 1765).

pamphlets were published in the 1750s, in Edinburgh.[124] Spearman, in both pamphlets asserted his distrust of Newtonianism and defended a scriptural interpretation as the only way to uncover the secrets of the universe. *Letters to A Friend* came across largely as a study in the history of religion. Spearman's chief work though is his *Enquiry after Philosophy and Theology* (1755) in which Spearman was concerned to show the insufficiency of Isaac Newton's discoveries for an explanation of the universe.

The collaboration of Spearman and Bate in publishing Hutchinson's *Works* began immediately after Hutchinson's death in 1737 and ended in 1749 with the publication of a twelve-volume set. The legacy of Hutchinson to his followers included his already published works as well as his manuscript notes waiting to be expanded. As a first task, Bate published two pamphlets from the manuscript notes in 1738 and 1739.[125] Apart from Bate and Spearman, there was only one other volunteer to claim Hutchinson's literary remains. William Gardner, the husband of Hutchinson's niece, attempted to contact both Catcott Senior and Forbes for the purpose of gaining their consent and help.[126] Bate took this as an attack on his position and contacted both Forbes and Catcott Senior in this matter. In a letter to Catcott Senior, Bate wrote:

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[124] Robert Spearman, *An Enquiry after Philosophy and Theology, Tending to show When and Whence Mankind came at the knowledge of these two important points* (Edinburgh, 1755); Robert Spearman, *Letters to a Friend concerning the Septuagint Translation and the Heathen Mythology* (Edinburgh, 1758).

[125] *An attempt to explain the Oeconomy of the Human Frame upon the Principles of the New Philosophy* (from a MS of John Hutchinson by Bate) (London, 1738), and *The Use of Reason recovered by the Data in Christianity from a MS of the late John Hutchinson* (published by Julius Bate) (London, 1739).

[126] William Gardner to Catcott Senior, 2 July 1737. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*, B 26063: f.20; William Gardner to Catcott Senior, 13 April 1737; Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*, B 26063: f. 24; William Gardner to Catcott Senior, 30 August 1737. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*, B 26063: f. 26.

> I conjecture by some circumstances ... that you have some suspicion of me and that it is what Gardner had wrote to you about me. He knew I stood between him and his hopes of Mr. Hutchinson's fortune.[127]

Gardner tried to convince Catcott Senior that Bate and Spearman were by no means 'judges of the value and vast importance of what he [Hutchinson] has left as well as what is published.'[128] However, Gardner was not successful in his efforts, and Spearman and Bate began the preparation of Hutchinson's edited works. The proposals for printing the *Works* appeared in 1747.[129] That same year Bate and Spearman published another advertisement for the same purpose. On 1 March 1748, *An Advertisement in relation to the proposals* appeared. The project had some difficulty in getting off the ground, it seems. Two months later, on 3 May 1748, *A Modest apology for those of the superior clergy with remarks on the late advertisement* was published as an attempt to hinder the publication of Hutchinson's *Works*.[130] The anonymous writer of this pamphlet was not against the system of thought put forward by Hutchinson, but felt that Bate and Spearman were endangering its reception:

> You will naturally ask me, where then doth the fault lie? And for what reason have Mr. Hutchinson's writings, in an age so addicted to subscribing, met with this severe, and as it is pretended, undeserved reception?[131]

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[127]Julius Bate to Catcott Senior, 17 March 1737. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 20

[128] William Gardner to Catcott Senior, 30 August 1737. *Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f.26. Gardner also published a Hutchinsonian pamphlet in 1745. See Appendix.

[129]Julius Bate and Robert Spearman, *Proposals for printing, by Subscription, the Philosophical and Theological Works of … Mr. Hutchinson, together with all his manuscripts* (London, 1747). There were three editions of this pamphlet; the third edition appearing in 1748.

[130]The anonymous pamphlet *A Modest Apology* was variously attributed to Mr. E. Langford or Thomas Sharp according to the catalogue of Hutchinsonian tracts in the Bristol Reference Library.

[131]*Modest Apology*: p. 3.

The author accused Bate and Spearman of not being able to promote Hutchinson's ideas correctly: 'a share of the blame lies at the door of the advertisers; who neglected to take some steps, that were previously necessary to be taken, to facilitate the publication, and to recommend it to the public.'[132] Bate immediately took action and published a defence.[133] A year later, in 1749, the twelve-volume *Works* appeared.

2.3. Alexander Stopford Catcott (1692-1749)

Catcott Senior was a fellow at St John's College, Oxford before he left the university to become headmaster of Bristol Grammar School in 1722. His contemporaries knew him as a good pulpit orator, and his interest in Hebrew scripture and philosophy was known among Bristol circles.[134] It is not known how he first acquired an interest in Hutchinsonianism. Catcott Senior was eager to understand Hutchinson's system of thought, but he had his difficulties. In his early correspondence with Hutchinson, Catcott Senior declared that he could not quite determine what kind of sources had been used by Hutchinson to construct the theory of the mechanical agents, fire, light and spirit. The difficulty of understanding Hutchinson's sources was something that Catcott Senior and his contemporaries had to confront:

> Some things in your proposal of your design, remain something obscure to me. I should be glad to know, whether you took your first hint of those important discoveries you have made (of the agents in this system) from your observations of the works of nature, or from the divine writings.[135]

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[132] *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[133] Julius Bate, *Defence of Hutchinson's plan: Being an answer to the 'Modest Apology,' etc. In a letter to a country clergyman* (London, 1748).
[134] *DNB*
[135] Catcott Senior to John Hutchinson, October 1733. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 26.

Catcott Senior was to become a fervent supporter of Hutchinson's ideas about trinitarian analogy, but in his early years of learning Catcott Senior had to consult Hutchinson in almost all aspects of the Hutchinsonian system. Catcott Senior was effectively a disciple of John Hutchinson in the sense that Hutchinson almost dictated to Catcott Senior from whom he should get help, even on matters like mathematics.[136] Catcott Senior's hesitation on whether or not to write a pamphlet on Hutchinsonian philosophy – not because he did not want to, but because he thought himself not capable of it – was eased as Hutchinson gave him continuous advice and teaching through their correspondence.[137] The correspondence between them dates from 1733 to 1737, the year Hutchinson died. Catcott Senior kept in contact with Spearman and Bate in the years to come.

The importance given to the Trinity by Hutchinsonians led them to argue that the word *Elahim*, which was to be found in the Old Testament so frequently, was a representation of the Trinity and thus of Christianity. Once Catcott Senior had digested Hutchinson's teachings in this respect, he set himself the task of publicising Hutchinsonian thinking and started to prepare a Hutchinsonian sermon for publication.

Previous to his sermon on *Elahim*, Catcott Senior decided to write a Latin defence of Hutchinson's tenets as early as 1733, and the letters exchanged show the difficulty he had in understanding Hutchinson's system of thought. Catcott Senior talked about how difficult it was to read Hutchinson and felt that this was why Hutchinson had so few readers. In July

[136] John Hutchinson to Catcott Senior, 30 January 1734. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26069, f. 4.
[137] Catcott Senior to John Hutchinson, 10 March 1734. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 5.

1733, Catcott Senior asked Hutchinson for guidance and wanted to be regarded as one of his pupils [138]

Catcott Senior had a good reputation among Newtonians such as William Whiston until it became obvious that Catcott senior was a follower of Hutchinson. As early as 1726, Whiston happened to give lectures in Bristol,[139] and according to Whiston's memoirs, Catcott Senior followed those lectures:

> This Mr. Catcott I then took to be one of the best scholars, and of as sober a mind as any of my auditors or friends at Bristol; whatever unhappy bias afterwards made him a proselyte, to my real grief and surprise, to that wild *Hebrew* enthusiast, Mr. *Hutchinson.*[140]

2.4. Duncan Forbes (1685-1747)

Among the immediate followers of Hutchinson, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Lord President of the Court of Session, had the privilege of publishing the first Hutchinsonian tract as early as 1732.[141] Duncan Forbes was born on the estate of Bunchrew at the Falls of Kilmorack, a few miles from Inverness, in 1685 and was educated at Inverness Grammar School. On his father's death in 1704, he went to study law at Edinburgh, but finding the teaching inadequate, he proceeded to Leiden, returning to Scotland in 1707.[142] In Leiden, he pursued his law studies for two years, though his interests were not limited to law, and religious studies in particular seem to have attracted him. During this period in Leiden he seems to have made considerable

[138] Catcott Senior to John Hutchinson, 27 July 1733. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f.1.
[139] *An Annotated Catalogue of the Works of A.S. Catcott.* Bristol Reference Library. Papers of A.S. Catcott Ref. No. 149.3 H/no/1154: p. 39.
[140] *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[141] Duncan Forbes, *A Letter to a Bishop Concerning Some Important Discoveries in Philosophy and Theology* (London, 1732).
[142] *DNB.*

progress 'in the Hebrew and several other oriental languages.'[143] Forbes's enthusiasm for Hebrew was so famous that he is said to have read the Hebrew Bible eight times.[144] In Forbes's account with his bookseller, Gavin Hamilton in Edinburgh, a bill for the year 1743 lists his purchases, including Hebrew Grammars and *Grammatica Arabica,* a very popular seventeenth-century work on Arabic by Thomas Erpenius.[145] Forbes's studies in Hebrew made him likely to be interested in Hutchinson's works, though the interest in Arabic would have disturbed Hutchinson.

The earliest known correspondence between Hutchinson and a follower was with Forbes. A letter written by Hutchinson in 1732, immediately before the publication of Forbes's *A Letter to a Bishop*, indicates that the two had already known each other for some time.[146] Historians have always regarded Duncan Forbes as lying outside of the enthusiastic circle of devoted disciples of John Hutchinson, a view that needs rectifying somewhat. The origin of Forbes's interest in Hutchinsonianism is explained in his pamphlet, *A Letter to a Bishop*. According to his account, his bookseller supplied him with a series of publications by John Hutchinson. After giving a careful reading to Hutchinson's books, Forbes was very impressed and consulted some of his 'learned' friends. To his great surprise, although all of them had heard of Hutchinson, 'yet none of them had given himself the trouble to examine them. They complained [of] the abstruseness

[143] G. Brunton and D. Haig, *An Historical Account of the Senators of the College of Justice from its Institution in MDXXXII* (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1832): p. 508.
[144] R. Carruthers, *The Highland Note-Book, or Sketches and Anecdotes* (Edinburgh: A. and C. Black, 1843): p. 76.
[145] G. Menary, *The Life and Letters of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Lord President of the Court Session 1685–1747* (London: Alexander House, 1936): p. 397.
[146] John Hutchinson to Duncan Forbes, 19 July 1732. National Library of Scotland, Additional Manuscripts. 2967: ff. 175–6.

of the author's way of writing, and concluded him so, certainly, to be half-learned, visionary, and in the wrong …'[147] However Forbes, revisiting his Hebrew learning, decided to give Hutchinson's ideas a hearing. He emerged as a sympathizer with Hutchinson's system and set himself the task of making Hutchinson's ideas understandable for a larger audience, rather than only for the patient few who were able to wrestle with the impenetrable style of his mentor.

The end product was the work entitled *A Letter to a Bishop*. This was a handbook of the Hutchinsonian system of thought without the constraints of Hutchinson's provocative style, which had harmed his reputation a great deal. Forbes summarized and explained, according to his own understanding, every important aspect of Hutchinson's arguments. He was reluctant, however, to adopt Hutchinson's militant approach towards those who were accused of abusing the scriptural truth about the cosmos. Forbes prepared a long summary of Hutchinson's thought about the historical abandonment of the scriptural truth about the cosmos and explained that there was no other way to learn about the cosmos but by revelation. However, Forbes's attack was directed against freethinkers in general, rather than aimed at personal targets. *A Letter to a Bishop* can be regarded as an attempt to put Hutchinson's ideas into mainstream Anglican circles, since Forbes went to Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London from 1723 to 1748, to ask for advice upon this matter. Gibson, 'whose settled policy was to see that all major posts went to clerics who were both firm ministerial Whigs in their politics

[147] Forbes, *Letter to a Bishop*: p. 8.

and unquestionably orthodox in their theology,'[148] was yet a representative of an orthodox Anglican tradition in Cambridge, along with the Master of Magdalene College, Daniel Waterland, the hammer of the Arians.[149] Duncan Forbes, just as Gibson would have preferred, was a Whig in his politics and orthodox in his theological speculation. This trait could also be observed in other early Hutchinsonian figures such as the Bristolian, Catcott Senior. *A Letter to a Bishop*, as an introduction to Hutchinson's ideas and purpose, was to become a great success in explaining Hutchinson's thought. With Forbes, it became clear that early Hutchinsonianism was to be placed within the long-standing debate on the Trinity.

Forbes's last known Hutchinsonian pamphlet, *Reflections on the Sources of Incredulity with Regard to Religion*, was published after his death, 10 March 1750. *Reflections* does not show a dramatic turn away from Hutchinson's thinking, but the influence of Newtonian friends upon Forbes is evident in this pamphlet.[150] Forbes himself was very friendly with people whose views differed from those of Hutchinson. Forbes's friendship with Newtonians partly explains his unwillingness to personalise his disapproval of and doubts about Newtonian philosophy. The travelling tutor of Forbes's son, John, was the mathematician Patrick Murdock who was also a Newtonian. Forbes's personal attitude towards natural philosophy showed differences from Hutchinson. He favoured empirical study rather more. On the other hand, in terms of philosophical speculation, Forbes without any

[148] F. C. Mather, *High Church Prophet, Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733-1806) and the Caroline Tradition in the later Georgian Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992): p. 6.
[149] P. Searby, *History of the University of Cambridge, Vol. 3, 1750–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): pp. 279-284.
[150] *Memoirs of the Life of the right Hon. Duncan Forbe*s was printed for the author by Andrew Henderson, himself an admirer of Newton.

doubt was a critic of Newtonianism. After all, Forbes was a member of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh, whose members included 'judges like Baron Clerk [Dr. John Clerk] and Forbes of Culloden did observe comets, [and wrote] on the mining technology'.[151] The Philosophical Society of Edinburgh at the time was famous for joining the debate over the accuracy of Newtonian science. Forbes was known among his fellows in the Society for his criticism of Newton's philosophy. At the dinner parties which Lord President Forbes and Colin Maclaurin together attended, 'Newton, Leibnitz, Clerk, and most of the Philosophers were attacked and defended'.[152] In his publications, however, Forbes passed moderate comments concerning the discoveries of Isaac Newton and showed reluctance to accept that Newton himself had threatened the Christian Trinity by demonstrating unitarian tendencies. 'It must be owned Sir Isaac's modesty was much greater than that of his followers … in the respect with which … he treated the Deity and Scriptures.'[153] Forbes argued that the one to blame was Descartes, 'a Frenchman … not content with world-making … [but having] proceeded to God-making'.[154] Forbes's consistent unwillingness to follow the militancy of Hutchinson against Newton was expressed most fully in his last pamphlet. Forbes rather preferred to deal with the theoretical side of Hutchinson's agenda, without necessarily attacking or insulting a group or person directly. In this respect, Forbes cannot be regarded as a full-blooded Hutchinsonian,

[151] Roger L. Emerson, 'The Philosophical Society of Edinburgh,' *British Journal for the History of Science*, 12 (July 1979): pp. 154–91, p. 171.
[152] Alexander Monro, *Secundus, Essays, and heads of lectures … with a Memoir of Life…*(Edinburgh, 1860). Quoted in Emerson 'The Philosophical Society of Edinburgh': p.188, n. 127.
[153] Duncan Forbes, *Reflections on the Sources of Incredulity with Regard to Religion* (Edinburgh, 1750): pp. 45–6.
[154] Forbes, *Reflections*: p. 44.

rather as an incomplete one, especially when compared to the profile of the contemporary devotees of Hutchinson like Bate, Spearman and Catcott Senior.

2.5. Benjamin Holloway (1691–1759)

Benjamin Holloway, a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1726 published a translation of Woodward's *Naturalis Historia Telluris* with a long introductory account of the author's works. Holloway's interest in Woodward's studies on geology was evident as early as 1723. From examining the land structure in Bedfordshire, Holloway came to the conclusion that Woodward's theories were justified and published his results for the Royal Society.[155] It may well be possible that Holloway knew Hutchinson during the latter's partnership with Woodward. Between 1724 and 1730 Holloway was presented by Reynolds, Bishop of Lincoln, to the rectory of Middleton-Stoney, Oxfordshire, a position which he retained until his death.

Although there is not much information about how the two met, Hutchinson, in his correspondence with Catcott Senior, stated that he was to visit Holloway at his rectory in Middleton-Stony: 'I purpose to be at Oxford tomorrow and thence to the Revd. Mr. Holloway at Middleton, 10 miles from Oxford whence I may be heard of.'[156]

Hutchinson mentioned Holloway a good deal in his correspondence with Catcott Senior. Letters exchanged between Catcott Senior and

[155] Benjamin Holloway, 'An Account of the Pits of Fullers-Earth in Bedfordshire,' *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, 32 (1723): p. 419.
[156] John Hutchinson to Catcott Senior, 26 July 1734. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26069: f. 8.

Hutchinson in 1734, during the preparation of the *Tractatus,* an exposition of Hutchinsonian principles in Latin, provide information on Holloway's studies as well. Hutchinson mentioned Holloway as the author of the *Lemmata Principorum Mosaicum* and stated that this tract had been read in Oxford circles as early as 1734.[157] During this period, that is the early 1730s, the explications of Hutchinsonian thought had accumulated. First, Forbes came out with a *Letter to a Bishop* and now Holloway and Catcott Senior were preparing their own pieces for the cause. Hutchinson assisted his followers in their researches, although the publication of *Lemmata* seems to have been problematic for Hutchinson, since Catcott Senior was preparing the *Tractatus* at the same time and Hutchinson apparently found it hard dealing with the timing of Holloway's publication. Hutchinson was reluctant to favour one Hutchinsonian publication against the other, and stated that he would help anyone equally, as long as they promoted and improved his system:

> But must inform you that Mr. Holloway who writ the *Lemmata* has almost, if not quite, made an extract of the citations in the whole with short observations and that they are began to read at Oxford and cry aloud for explanations of your scheme. … I cannot tell how to act as you began first with it and besides I am engaged in another piece that is of infinitely greater value with me. I have no view but general and shall be ready to assist everyone who forwards the design.[158]

Catcott Senior published the *Tractatus* as late as 1738, due to his health problems. It seems that Holloway had more independence from Hutchinson than Catcott Senior. He was able to detach himself from the dedicated circle, of which Catcott Senior was a member. In the following

[157] John Hutchinson to Catcott Senior, 5 December 1734. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f.10.
[158] *Ibid.*

chapter it will be argued that Catcott Senior would carry his dependence upon Hutchinson to extremes, to the extent that he would not defend himself against his critics, but preferred to leave Hutchinson to do so.

The relationship of contemporary followers with Hutchinson seems to have involved a considerable authority exercised by Hutchinson himself. Here it becomes clear that Hutchinson's wish to 'forward the design' was successfully undertaken by Holloway so much so that, he emerges as the most successful follower in digesting Hutchinson's system of thought in all its respects in the early stages of the movement.

Historians have interpreted Holloway's Hutchinsonianism with suspicion. Nevertheless Holloway's reluctance to declare publicly his colours may have had more to do with his sense of his own status, than any substantial disagreement. Holloway's Hutchinsonianism stood on similar grounds to that of Forbes in the sense that they both distanced themselves from the feverish supporters of Hutchinson and rather preferred to appreciate his system of thought with a blend of their own interpretation of it. Holloway tried to make the distinction of his brand of Hutchinsonianism clear in the advertisement he appended to *The Commemorative Sacrifice*, a sermon that he preached at the visitation at Woodstock on Friday, 8 October 1736:

> I would have the reader here be informed, that, for the explanations of some words and things given in the discourse above, I have been beholden to the works of the author of Moses's Principia: which (though' that author and myself have, for a good while, had no correspondence together) as it is but justice, I am not the less ready to acknowledge.[159]

[159]Benjamin Holloway, *Commemorative Sacrifice, A Sermon by Benjamin Holloway preached at the visitation Holden* (London, 1737). Advertisement at the end of the pamphlet.

Holloway wanted to be seen as admiring Hutchinson's ideas but claiming his independence. The only Hutchinsonian Holloway seemed to have maintained contact with and looked up to was Duncan Forbes, perhaps another sign that social snobbery may have been at work here. In 1745, Holloway had a work ready for publication but found it an effort to further develop the Hutchinsonian method of dealing with the roots of Hebrew words. In the 1751 edition of the pamphlet entitled *Originals, Physical and Theological, Sacred and Profane*, Holloway openly declared that he had hesitated to publish such material for fear of a bad reception. This was perhaps a sign of the growing perception of the bad reputation of Hutchinson and the ideas inspired by him. Holloway consulted Forbes in this matter and sent him his manuscript to get his approval. Forbes's reply was positive: 'I wish Mr. Holloway [will] meet with encouragement to enable him to go on, and exhibit to the Public his farther Meditations on this Subject.'[160] It is no surprise that Holloway thought Forbes was a suitable person to consult, since Holloway felt that Forbes, like himself, had 'a thorough knowledge of Mr. Hutchinson's writings; and to value them according to their just merit.'[161]

Holloway is one of the few persons to have published a considerable amount of Hutchinsonian material. Although some of the pamphlets attributed to him are not available, the ones accessible constitute a valuable collection of Hutchinsonian pamphlets.[162] In Holloway's writings, which explicate Hutchinsonian thought without repeating Hutchinson's words, we

[160] Benjamin Holloway, *Originals, Physical and Theological, Sacred and Profane or An Essay towards a Discovery of the first descriptive Ideas in Things, by Discovery of the Simple or Primary Roots in Words* (Oxford, 1751). See Introduction, Duncan Forbes to Mr. Harper, 15 April 1745 (no pagination).
[161] Holloway, *Originals*, Introduction (no pagination).
[162] See Appendix for a list of Holloway's publications.

are able to understand how and why Hutchinson's agenda was welcomed by his early followers.

For orthodoxy in general and for Hutchinsonians in particular, as explained earlier in this chapter, there was a need to defend the values and doctrines of Protestant trinitarian Christianity. Hutchinson and his early followers came to the forefront with an agenda that provided a complete defence of orthodox Protestantism. Hutchinsonians were by no means alone in providing defences for orthodox Protestantism, but the way in which they did it was unique. Hutchinsonianism, as will be explained in the forthcoming chapter, was not only a multifaceted system, but with the trinitarian foundation for all of its branches (cosmology, theories of knowledge and analogy, exegesis, Hebrew studies and its approach to the history of religion) it certainly showed differences from other orthodox defences. Chapter Three will be devoted to an explication of Hutchinsonianism as a system.

CHAPTER 3
A COMPACT DEFENCE AGAINST AN OVERALL ASSAULT: THE TRINITARIAN SYSTEM OF JOHN HUTCHINSON

In this chapter I would like to explain Hutchinsonianism as followed by Hutchinson and those followers who showed no disagreement with or doubt about his system, and to make some comments about those who were less dogmatic in their reception of Hutchinson, particularly Duncan Forbes and Benjamin Holloway. Hutchinson's system of thought was a deliberate attempt to divert certain Renaissance and Enlightenment strands of thought into channels that would reinforce Trinitarian Christianity instead of undermining it. Hutchinson's overall aim was to liberate Christianity from all the contemporary trends in the Church he saw as corrupting the true Church, particularly anti-trinitarianism of all kinds, and to reassert the authority of the Bible. He wished to use what were to him modern ideas for his own ends. By doing so, he not only provided a critique of the Enlightenment, but also suggested that a devout Christian could pursue Enlightenment arguments in a right direction.

The organization of the chapter will be structured around the different elements of Hutchinson's system. These were the unpointed text of the Hebrew Old Testament, analogical argument combined with a strict 'sensationalism', a trinitarian cosmology, Hutchinsonian biblical exegesis and the Hutchinsonian approach to the history of religion. Although Hutchinson intertwined the branches of his system in his works, it will be more convenient here to treat them separately and to show how each

contributed to his overall objective. Others of course defended Protestant, Trinitarian Christianity in different ways. While explaining Hutchinson's system, I will point out in each section how every element of Hutchinsonianism seemed, at least to Hutchinson and his followers, especially to answer the needs of the time.

3.1. Hebrew

The question of the authenticity of the Books of Scripture forced intellectuals in the eighteenth century to revisit the language of the Old Testament text.[163] The agenda of the Hutchinsonians here was to highlight the Old Testament's trinitarian elements, as they saw them. In an eighteenth-century setting where the authority and the revealed nature of the Bible was under attack, the effort of Hutchinson and his early followers can also be seen as an attempt to reinstate the authority of the Book, again in a proper Protestant fashion. The way Hutchinsonians chose to do this was to go back to the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament — in other words, the written evidence as written.

The orthodox view was founded on the belief that Christianity was prefigured in the Old Testament account. The controversies over the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies in the eighteenth century between orthodoxy and freethinkers involved a treatment of the mysteries of the religion. While figures like Toland totally rejected the idea that Christian

[163] See for example, R.A. Muller, 'The debate over the Vowel Points and the Crisis in Orthodox Hermeneutics,' *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 10 (1980): pp. 53-72. As a more general source, see B. Uffenheimer and H.G. Reventlow (eds.), *Creative Biblical Exeg*esis: *Christian and Jewish Hermeneutics through the Centuries* (Sheffield: Journal for the study of the Old Testament Press, 1988). On eighteenth-century methods of interpretation in England, see, J.C. Weinsheimer, *Eighteenth Century Hermeneutics: Philosophy of Interpretation in England from Locke to Burke* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

doctrine could be rested on the mysteries of the Old Testament,[164] orthodoxy was involved in an effort to prove otherwise.[165] Hutchinson's method was to find, not only prefigurations of Christ in the Old Testament, but explicit reference to the Trinity.

Accordingly, Hutchinson explored Hebrew linguistics as the key to understanding the trinitarian Christian promise in the Old Testament. Everywhere in it he found signs of the Trinity. 'Heavens,' for instance, was interpreted as having a two-fold meaning: the three basic elements of the material universe — fire, light and spirit — and the spiritual powers of the Trinity. Hutchinson argued that when the Old Testament text was deciphered root-by-root, Genesis was found to provide a full account of the natural history of creation and an equally full account of Christian revelation.[166]

> we may justly say…that Moses has given us more philosophy in one single chapter, the first of Genesis I suppose, than all the philosophers and explainers of nature put together.[167]

Hutchinson did not go as far as mystics such as Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) and his followers, or the Rosicrucians, in terms of suggesting that there was a secret code to the divine truth, but he shared the suggestion of Boehme that the Adamic or perfect language held this truth, and for Hutchinson this

[164] John Toland, *Christianity not Mysterious: or a Treatise shewing that there is nothing in the Gospel contrary to reason, not above it, and that no Christian Doctrine con be properly called a Mystery* (London, 1696).
[165] See H.W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative, A Study in Eighteenth and nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974) and D. Hirst, *Hidden Riches, Traditional Symbolism from the Renaissance to Blake* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964).
[166] *Moses's Principia* (1724) includes a sentence by sentence interpretation of the book of Genesis.
[167] *Works*, vol. 1: p. 2.

language was unpointed Hebrew.[168] He criticized especially the Rosicrucians for their excessive symbolism in this matter.[169] The non-juror, William Law (1686-1761), like Hutchinson, argued that the Words of God were pure, whereas 'the Words of Men are, as Men are, weak, vain, earthly, and of a poor and narrow Signification.'[170] Law, however did not specifically designate Hebrew as 'the language' as Hutchinson for did unpointed Hebrew. Talking about the ways to attain divine knowledge, Law stated that his learned friends suggested different methods of grasping revealed truth and added, somewhat sceptically:

> One told me, that *Hebrew* words are all; that they must be read without points; and then the Old Testament is an open Book. He recommended to me a Cart-Load of Lexicons, Critics, and Commentators, upon the *Hebrew* Bible.[171]

Law argued that this method was one of the methods he considered, but he ended up choosing Boehme as his mentor.[172]

Hutchinson acknowledged using sources from the cabbala for his purposes as well, though he ended up rejecting them. He admitted in one of his letters that he consulted seventeenth-century cabbala sources, but found nothing to help him with his scheme. In a letter to Catcott Senior he said he had been reading ***Kabbala Denudata.***[173] This work was translated into

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[168] See B. Vickers, 'Analogy versus identity: The rejection of Occult symbolism, 1580–1680,' in B. Vickers (ed.) *Occult and Scientific Mentalities in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984): p. 107.
[169] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 115.
[170] Quoted in Cantor and Lindberg (eds.) *The Discourse of Light*: p. 77. See William Law, *A Demonstration of the Errors of a Late Book called A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (London, 1737): pp. 6–7.
[171] William Law, *The Way to Divine Knowledge, Being Several Dialogues between Humanus, Academicus, Rusticus, and Theophilus* (London, 1752): p. 100.
[172] For wider Behmenist influences in the eighteenth century, see B.J. Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought, Behmenism and its development in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): pp. 180-205.
[173]Knorr von Rosenroth**,** ***Kabbala Denudata, seu doctrina Hebraeorum Transcendentalis et Metaphysica atque Theologica. Opus … in quo ante ipsam Translationem Libri … cui Nomen Sohartam Veteris, quam Recentis …*** (Francofurti, 1677).

English by Samuel Mathers in 1887 as *Kabala Unveiled. Kabala Denudata* was 'the most famous corpus of Latinized kabbalistica ever published' and was read by Newton as well.[174]

Hutchinson argued that there was room for everyone to understand the truth about the universe; it was just a matter of taking up the revealed text as the only valid source of information. In his Hebrew Writings Perfect, Hutchinson argued that the secrets of the universe were there in the symbolic representations of the Hebrew Bible in its unpointed form, which were made known by revelation 'emblematically.'[175] Hutchinson used a tool of the New Science, the sensationalist theory of knowledge, for his purposes of promoting his hermeneutics. Our senses, Hutchinson agreed, were the only media through which we could observe nature; however, in doing this they provided us with no sure information about the mechanism that produced observable motion. The answer was not in nature; it was in the 'words of God,' which were expressed, in the gifted language of the original Hebrew:

> The powers in this system were also made known by Revelation emblematically, and the description of them is also recorded and as it is necessary we should know the difference and know these act mechanically, it was necessary they should be made capable of being known by sensation. But since that knowledge, or the knowledge of what is contained in those records, by losing the knowledge of the Hebrew language has been lost, though some parts of them may have been discovered by conjectures or observations, yet it appears, the knowledge of the whole system, was never discovered, or recovered, by any man, or acquired otherwise, though every branch of it comes under sense.[176]

The Hebrew language for Hutchinson was not conventional or arbitrary, while all other languages were:

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[174] M. Goldish, *Judaism in the Theology of Sir Isaac Newton* (Dortrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998): p. 29.
[175] Works, vol. 7: p. 87.
[176] *Ibid.*

> The Hebrew language is worthy its omniscient author, and so formed as to convey perfect ideas, equally free from the deficiency of the modern languages, they have indeed letters to form sounds, but the words they compose are arbitrary, uncertain, and frequently false.[177]

Although the original meaning of Hebrew had long been lost and corrupted, Hutchinson volunteered to clear the text of mistakes. By the corruption of Hebrew, Hutchinson meant the Massoretic and Talmudic traditions, which had been used to add points to the Hebrew consonants.[178]

Hutchinson claimed that he was the first 'who dared to show the Excellencies and Beauties of the Hebrew Tongue, and the Imperfections of the rest.'[179] He further declared that 'I am also the first who has broke off the fetters clapped upon that language, cleared many of the blunders in the present translations.'[180] Hutchinson claimed himself as an authority to be cited ,'as well as the Rabbies', in subjects related to Hebraic studies.[181]

Hutchinson's footsteps were followed loyally by his immediate followers in most respects mentioned above. His contemporary followers were as closely involved in Hebraic studies as he had been himself. Regarding the importance of original Hebrew as the revealed language, Spearman and Bate shared the same enthusiasm. They both argued for the study of the original, unpointed text of the Old Testament. They agreed that the 'principal thing the learner has to attend is the proper meaning of the several roots, which he may obtain by comparison'.[182]

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[177] *Abstract*: p. 41.
[178] Works, vol. 7: p. 139
[179] Works, vol. 4: p. 107.
[180] *Ibid.*
[181] Works, vol. 6: p. 424.
[182] Spearman and Bate, *An Abstract from the Works of John Hutchinson, 2nd edition* (London, 1755).

A reviewer of one of Bate's works, *The Integrity of the Hebrew Text*, observed the basic argument made by him on the use of original Hebrew: 'This piece is introduced with a short view of the argument for the genuineness of the books in the Old Testament, which, according to the author, are not only records of our faith, but the repository of all learning, natural and divine, and the evidence for the New Testament.'[183] Bate's remark epitomizes how well he embraced Hutchinson's idea on Hebrew. Bate also published a Hebrew Grammar.[184]

Benjamin Holloway promoted the Hutchinsonian argument for the primitive roots of Hebrew. He argued against those who believed that Hebrew had sister dialects like Arabic. This would have jeopardized the Hutchinsonian argument that the Hebrew language was given by God himself to Adam.[185] Holloway argued that the Hebrew language was the antediluvan one, which had endured from the creation of the world.[186] Therefore, Hebrew had 'the Preference, in Excellency, to all other languages.'[187] Duncan Forbes of Culloden too promoted the study of Hebrew without delving into the etymologies of supposedly related and later languages. To assert the essentially Hutchinsonian point that the Trinity was spoken of in the Old Testament revelation, Forbes pointed out that a careful study of Hebrew, in the original Hebrew text, would show that 'the eldest of all languages, the Hebrew, uses almost always the plural noun *Elahim* when

[183] *Monthly Review* for February 1755.
[184] Julius Bate, *A Hebrew Grammar: Formed on the Usage of the Words by the Inspired Writers: being An Attempt to Make the Learning of Hebrew Easy.* (London, 1751).
[185] Benjamin Holloway, *The Primaevity and Preeminency of the Sacred Hebrew, Above all other languages* (London, 1754). For a contemporary review of the pamphlet see *Monthly Review* for August 1754: p. 74.
[186] Holloway, *Primaevity*: p. 159.
[187] Holloway, *Primaevity*: p. 80.

speaking of the deity,' an idea clearly taken from the Hutchinsonians.[188] Among the earliest followers, Catcott Senior was the first to bring the Hutchinsonian method of dealing with Hebrew into the public eye. His pamphlet *The Supreme and Inferior Elahim* (1735) established the Hutchinsonian reputation among intellectual circles for years to come. Catcott Senior's pamphlet created a controversy that will be investigated in detail in the forthcoming chapter. It would however be fitting to state here that with Catcott Senior's pamphlet, it became apparent that Hebraic studies were one of the main tools of Hutchinsonians in their defence of the Trinity. With this pamphlet, the Hebraic method of Hutchinsonians was provided with an audience, for Hutchinson himself had made it less than clear in his writings as to how to use the unpointed text. The word *Elahim* in the Old Testament was interpreted by Catcott Senior as a plural noun so as to underline the promise of trinitarian Christianity in the Old Testament text. When used in the plural, as Catcott Senior put it, before the Jews had corrupted the text by pointing and reducing it to a singular noun, *Elahim* signified the Triune God. The way to come to this conclusion lay in the method Hutchinson had hinted at and which Catcott Senior deciphered, basically a study of Hebrew roots, allowing different interpretations of the same root to be related to each other. In this way, there were a variety of meanings for a single word like *Elahim*, which could be used to analyse the completeness and coherence of the Trinitarian revelation as contained in the Old Testament.

[188] Forbes, *Letter to A Bishop*: p. 125.

The use of the unpointed Hebrew text to uncover the true meaning of the written revelation both served the Protestant identity of the Hutchinsonians and established their difference from other biblical exegetes of the time. The Hutchinsonian Hebrew method also served as a foundation of their belief in theological representation, in the sense that the observable universe could be shown to be a similitude of the divinity. It was the book of scripture, in its original language, that pointed towards a triune God, and which also led Hutchinsonians to argue that the universe should have a trinitarian organization. Thus the unpointed Hebrew of the Old Testament, Hutchinson thought, analogically expressed the truth about the universe. This written Hebrew, though a totally sensible object, was at the same time a medium for the truth about the material universe and which also showed it to be analogous to the divine truth. Although accessed through the senses, this Hebrew, because it was a revealed text, provided access to non-material truth for Hutchinson. In this sense, it can be argued that there was an element of Hermetic influence on Hutchinson. In the next section I will explain this analogy from the divine to the material cosmos alongside the Hutchinsonian theory of knowledge which supported it.

3.2. Analogy and 'Sensationalism'

The second branch of Hutchinsonian thought consisted of ideas on analogy and its relationship to the possibilities of acquiring knowledge. Hutchinson's promotion of divine analogy, the idea that there was an analogy between theological truth and the material cosmos, rested on a belief that a knowledge of things, divine and natural, was to be attained via a pathway, provided by

scripture, that would lead to the appreciation of the similitude between the two. This belief in analogy went hand in hand with a kind of 'sensationalism' adopted by Hutchinson and his followers. As the Bible was a physical object, appreciated through the senses, this written revelation could be neatly fitted into a 'sensationalist' approach, at the same time conveniently excluding claims to other kinds of revelation. This supported the Hutchinsonian reliance on the Bible as the supreme source of Christian knowledge — something clearly an advantage to those who would defend a Protestant Christianity — and, together with the method of interpreting the Hebrew of the Old Testament, gave the Hutchinsonians special access to that knowledge.

Theological representationalism, or analogy from the revealed text to the cosmos, was important to Hutchinsonians, for it answered the need to challenge the then fashionable belief that a study of material cosmos, itself alone, would reveal the dynamics of the material cosmos. Even more dangerous was when this study of the material cosmos pretended, unaided, to result in knowledge that included the divine, or when it threatened to do so. For example, Newton's discovery of non-material, occult forces within material objects, seemed to threaten to include the divine within the material cosmos and to allow conclusions about the divine to be derived from that alone. Such an empirical and potentially pantheistic approach brought about a reaction from orthodox churchmen, and not only Hutchinson or Hutchinsonians.

Two important texts discussing the importance of divine analogy were published during Hutchinson's lifetime, respectively by Peter Browne,

the Provost of Trinity College in Dublin,[189] and Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham.[190] Both Browne and Butler wanted to challenge the Deists and tried to show the limitations of natural religion in providing insight into the nature of the divine. They argued that a transcendent God could not be approached or explained through the ordinary material world, a viewpoint to which Hutchinson also subscribed, at least in the sense that it could not be approached through the material cosmos alone:

> Revelation is only one source of knowledge and … very limited aspects of the physical system could be ascertained by other means, for example, through the senses.[191]

Like Hutchinson, though perhaps less so, Brown and Butler were still inspired by the Renaissance Neo-Platonic conception that the observable universe was a microcosm of the divine.[192] One might say the same, on the opposing side and in using analogy in another direction, of the Deist users of cosmology.

Although it is impossible to argue that Brown's pamphlet on the theory of knowledge had an influence on Hutchinson, since it appeared much later than the 1724 edition of Hutchinson's *Moses's Principia*, it is true that Browne's and Hutchinson's sensationalism both rested on the 'denial that we can literally understand things divine and supernatural.'[193]

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[189] See A. R. Winnett, *Peter Browne: Provost, Bishop, Metaphysician* (London: SPCK, 1974) as the only detailed study on Peter Browne. See C. D. A. Leighton, 'Knowledge of Divine Things: A Study on Hutchinsonianism,' *History of European Ideas* 26 (2001): pp. 159-75 on the perusal of Browne's ideas by later generations of Hutchinsonians. Browne's two relevant pamphlets were *Things divine and supernatural concerned by Analogy with things natural and Human* (London, 1733) and *The Procedure, Extent and limits of the Human Understanding* (London, 1728).

[190] Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of religion* (London, 1736).

[191] Works, vol. 5: p. 85.

[192] E. R. Wasserman, 'Nature Moralized: The Divine Analogy in the Eighteenth Century,' *English Literary History* 20 (1953): pp. 39–76.

[193] D. Berman, 'Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment in Irish Philosophy,' *Archiv fur Geschichte der Philosophie* 64 (1982): pp. 148–65, p. 161. See also *The Irish Enlightenment*

True to the nature of their Protestant devotion, Hutchinsonians held that all knowledge, and especially knowledge of divine things, should be found within the sacred text. It was the special nature of the revealed, sacred text, rather than any special kind of perception or sensation, that allowed some surer knowledge of divine things. Sensations of other things in the material world could tell us something about the material world and could point to or signify divine truths, but not unaided. It was possible:

> to study the natural world by comparing material things [e.g. fossils], but it also permits us with the aid of the Bible to make inferences from sensory data to the unobservable realm.[194]

Here analogy from scripture was a necessary aid.

Locke's and Hutchinson's positions, when compared, show that the crucial differences were in their treatment of analogy. Hutchinson's attitude was a reaction to the departure of Locke and his fellow intellectuals from the point of view that there was a realm of the essences of things and that their representation could be found in the sacred text. The New Science rejected this point of view and turned its attention to the observable realm in its search for the truth about the universe, and most dangerously in a search for the truth about the relationship between God and the material universe. Analogy must always work in both directions, but in analogy from scriptural knowledge to empirical knowledge drawn from the material world, scripture must have the primacy. For Hutchinsonians, a transcendent God could not be approached, nor the truth about the universe reached, through the ordinary material world, except with the assistance of scriptural knowledge and analogy from scripture.

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and Counter Enlightenment (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2002) for the latest version of Berman's study on religious and philosophical antagonisms in eighteenth-century Ireland.

[194] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 20.

Locke's 'sensationalism' promoted nature – rather than the abstract world of ideas and words – as the source of knowledge. Hutchinson, however, though using the same premises, argued the opposite:

> The knowledge of nature from sense, nay even the deductions of the soul from that knowledge … can do nothing, without the conscience of the soul by revelation.[195]

Hutchinson's main objective was to avoid making human reason the primary element in the process of learning. The premises Hutchinson used, such as reducing understanding to sensory perception, or his rejection of innate ideas,[196] served his purpose of disabling 'human reason' as the central faculty for attaining sure knowledge of the divine, or even of the material cosmos as well. 'There can be no evidence that there is any such knowledge innate, or annexed to the Soul of Man.' He wished to put the 'revealed text' in the prime position and rejected the granting of any authority to reason that had not been sanctioned by the authority of revelation.

3.3. Cosmology

The third branch of Hutchinson's thought consisted of his ideas on cosmology. His cosmology was thoroughly trinitarian, based as it was on the triune operation of fire, light and spirit as the principal agents in a self-sufficient, mechanical universe. Hutchinson designed his cosmology to provide an alternative to Newton's theory of the universe. In opposition to Newton's theory of the void, Hutchinson argued that space was filled with particles that made up what he called 'an ethereal fluid'. The essential role of this fluid theory was to avoid what to him was the problem of the Newtonian

[195] *Works*, vol. 8: p. 48.
[196] *ibid.*, p. 20.

vacuum, where matter had to be endowed with active, non-material qualities like gravity, which could perform operations in nature in or across a vacuum.[197] Hutchinson and his followers subscribed to the view that: 'God fills all things, leaving nothing void.'[198]

There were other non-Newtonian theorists of the universe who looked in similar directions as Hutchinson. Fluid theorists, as G. N. Cantor suggested, concentrated on the relations between light, heat, fire and fluids.[199] Light was of particular importance to pre-eighteenth-century fluid theoreticians, suggesting possible influences upon Hutchinson. Neo-Platonist and Hermetic writers of the Renaissance and seventeenth century had often accepted that light was a substance that flowed from God and expanded throughout the universe.[200]

The difference between the Hutchinsonians and Newtonians over the void was crucial. The active matter of Newtonians, acting non-mechanically in a vacuum, for Hutchinsonians unacceptably undermined traditional mechanics and, as the active force was apparently immaterial and occult, had pantheistic implications. If gravity was seen as an immaterial force within matter rather than one material acting mechanically on another, then this was

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[197] For an authoritative account of the eighteenth-century conceptions of matter, see P. M. Heimann and J. E. McGuire, 'Newtonian Forces and Lockean Powers: Concepts of Matter in eighteenth-century Thought,' *Historical Studies in the Physical Sciences* 3 (1971): pp. 233–306. See also A. Thackray, *Atoms and Powers: an Essay on Newtonian Matter Theory and the Development of Chemistry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970); and R. E. Schofield, *Mechanism and Materialism: British Natural philosophy in an Age of Reason* (Princeton, 1970).

[198] *An Abstract from the Works of John Hutchinson, Esq. Being a Summary of his Discoveries in Philosophy and Divinity* (Edinburgh, 1753): p. 159. The British Library Catalogue suggests that this work may be written by George Horne, but the Catalogue of Hutchinsonian Tracts in Bristol Reference Library (most probably prepared by Hutchinsonian Alexander Catcott) suggests that it was written by a certain Buchanan from Edinburgh. Bristol Reference Library, Ref. No. 149.3 H/no/1154, Papers of Catcott.

[199] G. N. Cantor, *Optics after Newton, Theories of Light in Britain and Ireland, 1704–1840* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983): pp. 91–113.

[200] Ibid., p. 93.

an assault against the transcendence of God. An immaterial Spirit could never be intrinsic to the material cosmos. Hutchinsonians argued instead for a spiritual force, the glory of God, acting from outside through the active, material agents — fire, light and spirit (here a material thing) — on inert matter, thus preserving the transcendence of God.

The backbone of Hutchinson's cosmology was the belief that the three mechanical and therefore material agents called fire, light and spirit (or air) performed the operations of nature within the 'ethereal fluid.' These three agents were the only 'active' matter; the rest was passive or inert, whereas for Newtonians all matter was 'active'. The explanation of how the three mechanical agents performed their operations was given analogically by the story of the creation of the universe. The first act in the universe was initiated by the Triune God, a covenant established by the persons of the Trinity.[201] The universe was created ex nihilo and all three agents were created out of a single essence, thus analogically matching the structure of the Trinity. Their operations in the universe led to a continuous regeneration of all three agents.[202] The covenant of fire, light and spirit, like the Trinity itself, was already established before the creation of the earth, though not, unlike the Trinity, before the creation of the material universe of which they formed the primeval parts. Nothing else could enter into or execute the operations of these agents. This for Hutchinson meant a system in which the universe was mechanical and self-sufficient as opposed to the Newtonian conception of a universe in which God manifested Himself by special

[201] *Works*, vol. 7: p. 310.
[202] *Works*, vol. 6: p. 27.

interference at certain times. 'We can have no higher or other idea of Power *to* produce motion, or perform Action, but by mechanism.'[203]

God created the particles of inert gross matter that were to become the earth, and particles of atoms to compose the outer space. Initially these were in a flux; later fire, light and spirit acted from the centre towards the mass, which separated solids and fluids. Once they were separated, there was the formation of several strata that ended up forming the earth as it is.

In the universe as depicted later by the Hutchinsonian, Samuel Pike (1717-1773), the sun was at the centre and was the source of power and emitted particles of light from its substance, and these rays of light travelled in the universe until they reached the firmament.[204] When they reached the firmament they thickened and formed spirit (air), and were forced back from the firmament to the source of fire to start this circular motion again.[205] Hutchinson earlier had explained the interchange between fire, light and spirit:

> Fire generated light, which was always in action and endowed with the power to act upon other substances. The lines of light carried particles from the sun. Light subdued into air, air fed and supported fire, continually and in a circle, by the action of these, the earth generated everything.[206]

Hutchinson did not explain where he got these ideas from. Later, when the Hutchinsonian Alexander Stopford Catcott's *Tractatus* was translated into English by Alexander Maxwell in 1822, Maxwell commented on possible influences:

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[203] *Works*, vol. 5: p. 147.
[204] Samuel Pike, *Philosophica Sacra* (London, 1753).
[205] Cantor, *Optics after Newton*: pp. 104-105.
[206] *Abstract*: p. 310.

> According to the Stoics, the elements are capable of reciprocal conversion; air passing into fire, or into water, earth into air and water. Fire and air was considered to have within themselves a principle of motion, but water and earth as merely passive.[207]

Hutchinson's trinitarian cosmology was the manifestation of what he understood from divine analogy.[208] In a nature where generally matter was inert, power was given to mechanically active material agents in order 'mechanically to act upon, and govern the other matter, inanimate and animate, in this system.'[209] According to Hutchinson, a mechanical conception of the universe could be supported without necessarily assigning power to all matter as Newton had done. Otherwise, argued Hutchinson, one would contradict the Genesis account:

> When a man ascribes greater powers to properties in matter than he does to God, does he not make matter God? When a man imagines that pure space, or space with a thin fluid in it, or a chaos, or matter had such duration, does he not set that up for God?[210]

A defence of revelation meant a defence against the assaults of at least potentially Deist/Arian challenges to orthodox Trinitarian conceptions of the universe. There were pamphlets offering such a defence before Hutchinson published his first.[211] Hutchinson's attempt could be regarded as pointing out the danger of pantheistic tendencies of any kind, but also as

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[207] A. Maxwell, trans., *The Antient Principles of True and Sacred Philosophy as lately explained by John Hutchinson, Esq. Originally Published in Latin by A. S. Catcott LLB …* (London, 1822). The translator's comment goes on to give a reference to Plutarch. *Plac. Phil*. L.2.c.1.2: p. 18.

[208] *Works*, vol. 6: p. 31

[209] *Ibid.*

[210] Quoted by A. J. Kuhn, 'Glory or Gravity: Hutchinson vs. Newton,' *JHI* 22 (July–September 1961): p. 311.

[211] See Richard Brocklesby, *An Explication of the Gospel-Theism and the Divinity of the Christian Religion, Containing a True Account of the System of Universe, and of the Christian Trinity* (London, 1706). See also John Browne, *A Discourse on the Sacred Mystery of the Blessed Trinity* (London, 1719), written for a defence of the Doctrine of Trinity against William Whiston, *Primitive Christianity Revived* and *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*.

supplying an alternative cosmology. While doing this, he tried to show that arguing for a clockwork universe was not a new discovery, but had already been mentioned in the Bible. There was no action at a distance within the material universe, for God had endowed three mechanical agents with such power to act upon matter, the fluid that filled the apparent void allowing mechanical action.

The search for a parallel between the spiritual and material realms meant for Hutchinson the reflection of the Trinity in the three mechanical agents in the physical world. Having this in mind, the explanation of natural phenomena could not be invented as Newton did, for the truth about the cosmos represented the truth about religion. Talking about the actions of fire, light and spirit, Hutchinson argued that their joint operation gave an idea of the Triune God.[212]

Hutchinson's immediate followers like Spearman subscribed to these cosmological ideas fully. Spearman's attitude towards unitarian tendencies came with a harsh critique of Newton. Spearman, in his *An Enquiry after Philosophy and Theology,* argued against almost all the components of the Newtonian cosmology. The general accusation Spearman levelled against the intellectuals of his time was their tendency to 'bend' the divine essence, as he expressed it: 'every man has a God … nowadays they are generally of his own manufacture.'[213] He accused Newton of creating a concept of the universe that would lead to a denial of the Trinity. 'His definitions of his Deus makes him to exist in one person; directly opposite … to the Christian

[212] *Works*, vol. 9: p. 233.
[213] Spearman, *Enquiry*: p. 1.

faith; which teaches, that he exists in three persons.'[214] Spearman saw the 'religion of nature' as the most dangerous enemy to revelation. This natural religion was the only faith of the Arians and Socinians, who were:

> So fond of taking God only to be one person and consequently the second and the third persons of the trinity turned out to be what people made of them, superior to men and divine but not by nature but by appointment.[215]

Accordingly, Spearman's scheme stemmed from his fear of the rise of infidelity. However, the study of nature should not have been an inspiration for unitarian tendencies as far as Spearman was concerned, since:

> This material world is an emblem or type of the immaterial, that it was framed so as to give us ideas … of the essence, existence … of God; which will prove … the fundamental point of Christianity.[216]

Among those quickly interested in Hutchinson's ideas, including his anti-Newtonianism, was Duncan Forbes. However he was not the least militant compared to Hutchinson in his attitude towards Newtonians as discussed earlier.[217] He was a friend of the Newtonian Colin Maclaurin. The anonymous pamphlet, *Memoirs of the Life of the right Hon. Duncan Forbe*s, was printed for the author by Andrew Henderson, himself an admirer of Newton.[218]

Forbes's friendship with Newtonians made him less likely to be vehement in his doubts about Newtonianism, though he had doubts. Forbes's personal attitude towards natural philosophy differed from Hutchinson, in so far as he favoured empirical study with a more open mind, yet he was also

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[214] *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[215] Spearman, *Letters to a Friend*: pp. 484–8.
[216] Spearman, *Enquiry*: p. 27.
[217] p. 75.
[218] *Memoirs of the Life of the late Right Honorable Duncan Forbes, Esq. Of Culloden; Lord President of the Court of Session in Scotland* (London, 1748).

open to Hutchinsonian suggestion: 'He had not enough of physical science to detect the absurdities with which the scheme of his favourite author [Hutchinson] abounds'.[219] In terms of philosophical speculation, he was, without any doubt, a critic of Newtonianism. As discussed earlier, Forbes, showed a moderated attitude towards the figureheads of Newtonianism while leaving room for criticism.[220] In some ways Forbes prefigured a more judicious stance that would much later manifest itself among later Hutchinsonians.

Forbes remained the most respectable of those influenced by Hutchinson in his own time. In a contemporary account of the Hutchinsonians, the adherents of the creed were criticized for their harshness of expression; but Duncan Forbes was regarded as the 'one single exception.'[221]

Benjamin Holloway published his *Experimental Philosophy Asserted and Defended* in 1740. In this pamphlet the fluid cosmology of Hutchinson was defended and Holloway presented Hutchinson as 'one of the greatest philosophers this Age and the last hath known.'[222] Holloway, in this pamphlet, focused on Hutchinson's cosmology as an alternative scientific paradigm to that of Newton. Differing somewhat from Hutchinson's own approach, Holloway tried to avoid the theological implications from and motivations for Hutchinson's theory of the universe and discussed the whole

[219] Alex. Fraser Tytler of Woodhouselee, *Memoirs of the life and writings of the honorable Henry Home of Kames* (Edinburgh, 1814), volume 1: p. 45.
[220] See pp. 76-7.
[221] William Hurd, A *New Universal History of the Religious Rites, Ceremonies and Customs of the Whole World, or A Complete and Impartial View of all the Religions in the Various Nations of the Universe* (London, 1788): p. 763.
[222] Benjamin Holloway, *Experimental Philosophy Asserted and Defended Against Some Attempts to Undermine it* (London, 1740): p. 45.

matter as a scientific speculation. He attempted to show that Hutchinsonian cosmology was valid without trying to prove its credibility by biblical support, and moreover to show that the system Hutchinson suggested was also compatible with experimental philosophy, something Hutchinson believed but was less willing to pursue in earnest. Holloway held the view that natural phenomena could be explained in natural terms in accordance with Hutchinson's cosmological scheme; experimental science could be self-sufficient in this respect, without referring to unseen forces to explain or justify natural phenomena.

> There are three mechanical natural agents [fire, light, and air], by which the operations of nature are performed…in favour of experimental philosophy, in opposition to occult qualities.[223]

Here, Holloway aimed at the weak points of Newtonian physics by arguing for a truly clockwork universe where the function of fire, light and spirit was sufficient. Although Holloway was only reinterpreting what Hutchinson had said before, his effort of trying to promote Hutchinsonian cosmology as a pure scientific method, without the aid of its biblical backing, was a remarkable effort, attempting to tackle opponents on their own ground.

3.4. Exegesis

A rather less essential part of the Hutchinsonian system, derived from the generally Sacramentalist, Laudian, High-Church position of Hutchinson and most of his followers, was their exegesis. To uphold the eternal nature of the Sacramentalist position, Hutchinsonians adopted a 'spiritual' interpretation of the Bible**.** This spiritual reading relied on more than a literal interpretation

[223] Holloway, *Experimental Philosophy*: p. 71.

of the Old Testament in order to demonstrate the congruity of the Testaments. There was long precedent for analogy being used as one of the means of doing this — relationships between symbols in the Old Testament analogically represented equivalent relationships among symbols in the New Testament.[224]

Religion however, for Hutchinson, had to be founded on the absolute authority of the Bible. Hutchinson's works were efforts to liberate religion from extra-biblical influences such as the various traditions, the teachings of the Church Fathers and the practices of the Church authorities. By providing a self-sufficient authority to consult in intellectual matters, Hutchinson thought he could prevent pantheistic and other heterodox speculation. Hutchinson stressed the necessity for an analogical interpretation of the Old Testament as a source of Christian knowledge. Among Hutchinson's immediate followers, it was Holloway who explained how the Hutchinsonian idea of using Hebrew linguistics to exhibit the analogy between the natural and divine realms, though only by going beyond Hutchinson's largely ***sola scriptura*** approach. Holloway published a pamphlet dedicated especially to the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures, ***Letter and Spirit.***[225] This is a remarkable work in the sense that it embodies and explores what the Hutchinsonian approach to scriptural interpretation was all about and at the same time invites tradition to help. Holloway took the famous quotation from St. Paul, 'The Letter kills, but the Spirit gives life,'[226] and interpreted it in accordance with his view of the importance of providing an explication of

[224] For a survey of non-literal exegesis, see P. J. Korshin, *Typologies in England, 1650-1820* (Princeton University Press, 1982).
[225] Benjamin Holloway, *Letter and Spirit, or Annotation upon the Holy Scripture according to both* (Oxford, 1753).
[226] St. Paul (2 Cor. 3: 6).

the various types, figures and hidden meanings in the Scripture, both the Old and New Testaments.

> Several names of figures, types, shadows, allegories, patterns, or exemplars, enigmas, parables, proverbs, dark speeches, similitudes … are all called in Scripture, by the word, spirit; and sometimes mysteries; the hidden mystery, &c.[227]

Holloway, giving his own view of how biblical statement was to be understood, referred to St. Paul and argued that the Letter of Scripture without the Spirit was dead.[228] After Holloway's biblical exegesis was performed, St Paul's statement became 'The Literal kills, but the Spiritual gives life.' Holloway, like other Hutchinsonians, preferred an older mode of biblical exegesis. The kind of biblical interpretation Holloway favoured resembled more that of the medieval Church and of the Church Fathers than the strictly text based Protestant exegesis. The spiritual dimension of the exegesis came mostly from the Fathers, the medieval theologians and the Puritan divines of the seventeenth century, and served the Hutchinsonians' argument that only such an interpretation enabled the knowledge of divine things.

There were ways to attain this knowledge, as Holloway pointed out. First, one had to understand that an individual part of Scripture was a link or key to another; in other words one part of Scripture spiritually expounded the other. The second method was by analogy 'or agreement of Scripture with Scripture.'[229] This was a commonplace view before the eighteenth century. Holloway was not singular in this in the eighteenth century, promoting so to

[227] Holloway, *Letter and Spirit*, Introduction: p. vii.
[228] *Ibid.*, p. vi.
[229] *Ibid.*, p. xii.

say, 'analogy of language' as something supplementing and in some cases opposing the fashionable 'analogy of nature.'

While promoting this spiritual approach to the reading of Scriptures, Holloway pointed out his difference from the likes of Jacob Boehme, by criticising Boehme's contention that one could achieve divine truth through contemplation. Holloway and the Hutchinsonians more generally argued that it had to be through the revealed text.

Holloway's pamphlet consists of a series of interpretations of parts of the Old Testament by cross-reference to the early Church Fathers whom Holloway thought to merit the highest regard after the 'Books of Holy Writ.'[230] This reversion to patristic modes of exegesis was not particularly Hutchinsonian. However, Hutchinson and his followers, Holloway the most notable in this, turned this method into a tool to provide justification for their emphatically trinitarian arguments, whilst focusing all possible authority on the text of scripture itself.

Within the Hutchinsonian exegetical tradition, Holloway was the first and remained one of their authorities. He will appear in the Hutchinsonian controversy on *Elahim*, dealt with in the following chapter, as a defender of Catcott's interpretation against Thomas Sharp. The reason for stressing Holloway's importance is that he developed a sense of his own, independent understanding of Hutchinsonianism, which is not necessarily true for all the early followers.

[230] *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

3.5. History of Religion

The debate between freethinkers and orthodoxy raged in the eighteenth century as to what the nature of the true religion was.[231] This row has been generally summarized as the battle of 'reason versus revelation'. As far as the use of the history of religion is concerned, both parties made extensive use of it.[232] 'As history was used by Churchmen to authorize the present, so it was employed by the Freethinkers as a tool of criticism.'[233] This criticism concentrated on the mystifying elements of Christianity as revealed and foreseen by the Old Testament prophecies.[234] There was an effort on the deists' side to show the conformity of beliefs in all early religions, essentially undermining the uniqueness of the Old Testament. Herbert of Cherbury promoted the universality of natural religion through a rigorous study of the comparative history of religion.[235] The likes of Anthony Collins, John Toland and Matthew Tindal rejected the allegorical method used to relate the two books of the Bible as a single continuing revelation. In Anthony Collins' *A Discourse of Free Thinking* (1713), 'the prophets of Israel, no longer recognized as foretelling the advent of either Christ or a Jewish messiah, were turned into agents of protest against priestcraft.'[236] Toland and Tindal tried to shake the uniqueness of the monotheistic religions of Judaism and Christianity by tracing the roots of these religions to Egyptian times:

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[231] J.A.I. Champion, *The Pillars of the Priestcraft Shaken: The Church of England and its Enemies, 1660-1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[232] See for example, P. Harrison, *'Religion' and the Religions in the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge Universtiy Press, 1990) as a study of the origins of the history of religion -a matter of central Hutchinsonian concern- is an important one.
[233] Champion, *Pillars*: p. 12. See also A. Richardson, *History Sacred and Profane* (1964).
[234] John Toland, *Letters to Serena* (London, 1704).
[235] Manuel, *Broken Staff*: pp. 174–91 for the profiles of eighteenth-century English Deists in this matter.
[236] Manuel, *Broken Staff*: p. 176.

> Basing their work on the ideas of the French and English Deists as well as on those of the Hermeticists and the Spinozists, they sought a concept of natural religion common to all nations, above and beyond its historical forms in different cultures.[237]

Orthodox Christians, on the other hand, believed that before Christianity, the religion of Israel was the purest revelation of God. Bishop Butler, William Warburton, William Waterland, William Law and Charles Leslie defended the orthodox view of Christianity time and time again.[238] For Hutchinsonians, the assault from the deist history of religion was coupled with the assault from Newtonian cosmology, with its supposed pantheistic and unitarian implications.

One of the problems deists presented for Hutchinsonians and to other orthodox Christians was their rejection of the allegorical method used to relate the two books as continuing revelations. The central idea of the deists of eighteenth-century England was that 'natural religion' had, and always had had, a universal appeal in contradiction to what revelation had to offer.[239] Once one showed that the two testaments did not even have a congruence, the belief in a continuing, reliable revelation had to be disputed, according to the deists. The use of history of religion in these deist attacks obviously undermined the role of revelation and so it was only natural that Hutchinsonians took a stand against such historical arguments as well. Hutchinsonian reliance on the Old Testament and on the history of religion was as frequent as for the deists. Hutchinsonians endeavoured to show that, if

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[237] J. Assman, *Moses the Egyptian, the Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997): p. 91.
[238] S. Gilley, 'Christianity and Enlightenment: An Historical Survey,' *History of European Ideas*, 1, (1981): pp.103-21.
[239] Manuel, *Broken Staff*: p. 175. See also A.J. Kuhn, 'English Deism and the Development of Romantic Mythological Syncretism,' *Proceedings of Modern Language Association* 61 (5) (December, 1956): pp. 1094-1116.

a true believer would read this history properly, it would show that Old Testament prophecies led to trinitarian Christianity, and even the heathen rites and symbols of the deity pointed also towards the Trinity.

This aspect of the Hutchinsonian system was directed especially against the writer of *Christianity as old as Creation* Matthew Tindal, and those who seemed to follow him. As a statement, Hutchinsonians agreed with the fact that Christianity was as old as creation, but for them it had to be a fully orthodox, trinitarian Christianity, the Trinity after all being necessarily eternal, a perfectly orthodox conclusion. If the Trinity was eternal, then revelation should always have been trinitarian. Not only should it be possible to prove that the unpointed Old Testament was trinitarian, but that the truth in all religion should be trinitarian. So Hutchinsonians were also concerned with pagan mythology to highlight any signs in it of the Trinity. In this way, the Enlightenment practice of historicizing Christianity was transformed in the hands of Hutchinson not only into a reemphasis on the Christian promise, but also exhibiting a distinctive feature of Hutchinsonians: the insistence on continuing evidence of the eternity of the Trinity.

The Essay towards the Natural History of the Bible *and* The Religion of Satan were Hutchinson's studies on the history of religion, in which he supported his arguments on Christianity with a historical interpretation of mainly ancient Greek and Egyptian sources. For Hutchinson:

> *Greek Philosophers are Thieves, who have taken their principal Notions from* Moses *and the Prophets, and have not had the gratitude to acknowledge it.*[240]

[240] Works, vol. 1: p. 40.

Hutchinson argued that not only the books of the Pentateuch but also the ancient and heathen symbols of divinity could be interpreted as evidence for the primeval origins of the Trinity. All that was needed to do therefore was, rather than rejecting every article that ancient Greek philosophers produced, he should 'only strip off what they added, or add what they stripped off.'[241]

It can be argued that this insistence on tracing trinitarian Christianity as far back as the ancient accounts is a distinctive feature of Hutchinson's history of religion and may be one of the most enduring Hutchinsonian attitudes. All the elements of Hutchinson's thought pointed towards a conception of the universe which was necessarily trinitarian, and a historical approach to scripture and religion would support his ultimate aim of showing that trinitarian Christianity was the father of all religions, obscured, but not completely hidden, by the Fall, then reaffirmed in the two testaments of the Bible. Now the task was to seal his argument with a series of historical proofs showing that Trinitarian Christianity was always 'revealed' as the true knowledge of the universe. In his treatment of Greek material, for example, Hutchinson argued:

> So Plato, when he would speak of supreme God, flies to its nearest similitude the sun. In Greek the ruling substance involved fire, light and spirit, which threefold division was not unknown to the latest heathens; hence their Ter Optimus Maximus, their liberations and sacrifices thrice repeated, the triple Mithras of Persia, their anima mundi, or central fire, which with lux and spiritus contains all things, according to Hermes.[242]

[241] *Ibid.*
[242] *Abstract*: p. 227.

According to A.J. Kuhn, 'Hutchinson's most important discovery, he and his followers believed, was his evidence for the primeval origin of revealed Christianity.'[243] The 'Christian Trinity *was* as old as creation' argued Hutchinson. Hutchinson thought it to be the best argument against the deist approaches to historicizing Christianity with the intention of undermining revelation.

Hutchinson, for this purpose, used extensive sources on the ancient or heathen traditions and histories. He found similarities in what ancients referred to as God. Hutchinson also used the information on heathen worship to point out their similarities to Christian representations of trinity. His argument was that heathens took their ideas about religion from revelation. Before the Old Testament was the surviving revelation to Adam before the Fall, even if it had been half-hidden in the course of the Fall.[244]

Hutchinson argued, however, that the interpretation of the symbols of trinity had ended up, with the pagans, as the worship of the symbols themselves, though in essence they were all representations of Trinity:

> When segments of the primitive Christians forsook the spiritual import of the cherubic emblems, they began to worship fire, light and air as ends in themselves, whereupon arose all the pagan idolatries.[245]

> And when through ignorance and imagination, they had lost the true emblems, they made ridiculous compounds of the heads of men, dogs, horses, wolves, &c., but most of them were trinities, three-formed, three-faced.[246]

A symbol for Elahim (God) was an oak tree, and Hutchinson argued that heathens used this, pointing out that Homer in his *Iliad* introduced

[243] Kuhn, 'Glory or Gravity,': p. 308.
[244] *Works*, vol. 3: pp. 78–87.
[245] *Works*, vol. 6: pp. 303–22.
[246] *Abstract*: p. 227.

Hector proceeding to a single combat with Achilles and signifying the absence of peace thus: 'There is no way from the oak, or from the rock, to hold course with him.'[247] For Hutchinson this meant that the Rock was also a reference, not just to God or the Church, but to the Trinity, referring to the Bible, Isa. 44: 8, and interpreting it accordingly as 'there is no Rock besides one of the Trinity.'[248] Hutchinson also consulted Bochart to argue that the Phoenicians had a deity called El, and his associates were called Elahim.[249] The use of typology in the eighteenth century was by no means uncommon:

> Typology in its strict, conventional sense had expanded by the middle of the seventeenth century to embrace imagery from pagan mythology and pagan literature. Hercules, Pan, Orpheus, Ceres, Achilles, Aeneas and dozens of other characters became pre-Christian types of Christ. We may trace the unbroken skein of English fascination with dark authors from the mid-seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, from Sir Thomas Browne, Henry More, and Samuel Butler to Blake, Coleridge and Shelley. Typology as an exegetical tool could perform a valuable function for those who hoped to extract meaning- from the works of mystics, cabalists, and hermeticists and from other writings.[250]

Hutchinson's use of typology was to serve his own ends, which was to provide a proof that the Trinity was eternal. Hutchinson did not delve into the discussion of whether Christ was prefigured or not, though he would have undoubtedly accepted that he was; he rather went to the heart of the matter.

There are suggestions that Hutchinson's arguments about the resemblance of ancient representations of the divinity and symbols of the Christian Trinity were probably influenced by Ralph Cudworth and his *Intellectual System of The Universe.* Alexander Maxwell, the nineteenth-

[247] *Iliad*: p. xxii., p. 126.
[248] *Abstract*: p. 222.
[249] Samuel Bochart, *Geographica Sacra* (Cadomi: P. Cardonellus, 1646).
[250] Korshin, *Typologies in England*: p. 6.

century translator and editor of the Hutchinsonian pamphlet *Tractatus* by A. S. Catcott, suggested that Cudworth, in his *Intellectual System*, had argued that the cherubim were a symbol of the sacred Trinity, and Maxwell pointed out the similarities between Cudworth and Hutchinson in terms of their reading of ancient material in this matter.[251]

The early followers of Hutchinson were also very much interested in the Trinitarian reading of the sources of the history of religion, having the same enthusiasm for underlining the archaic origins of the Trinity. Spearman's *Letters to A Friend* came across as a study in the history of religion. Spearman explained the Hutchinsonian way of interpreting myths as a good medium for hinting at Christian elements. The method Spearman suggested was to try to avoid the fact that myths were pagan and therefore unreliable, but to read them from a different perspective. Accordingly, his suggestion was to:

> Decipher pagan mythology in an easier manner than has yet been done, and clear up that learned confusion that has overspread the writings of such as have endeavoured to account for the origin and progress of idolatry.[252]

Spearman's reaction towards the use of the comparative religion of his day is representative of early Hutchinsonian thinking.

The recognition of Trinitarian Christianity within the text of the Old Testament and, further, through the pagan myths, was more than an exercise in history of religion for Hutchinsonians. Comparative religion, another deistic Enlightenment tool, in Hutchinsonian hands was made to serve fideistic ends.

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[251] A. S. Catcott, *Tractatus*, Maxwell (trans.), *The Antient Principles of True and Sacred Philosophy* (London, 1822): p. 155, p. 18n.
[252] Spearman, *Letters to A Friend*: p. 71.

3.6. Conclusion

The different parts of the Hutchinsonian system came together to serve the purpose of providing an overarching defence of the Trinity. Hutchinson and his early followers, who tried to clarify the difficulties of Hutchinson himself, were joined in a mission: the promotion of a spiritual and analogical reading of the Scriptures, using their own method, which relied heavily on the Hebrew roots, both to confirm their orthodox, Protestant, trinitarian beliefs and to show a material cosmos analogically consistent with their beliefs. By Hutchinson's means, a search for proof of the eternal existence and promise of trinitarian Christianity was possible, and it was a search that ranged beyond the Old Testament to encompass pagan myths and the investigation of the natural world as well. Almost all of the contemporary followers of Hutchinson supported this agenda. Cosmology was a component of Hutchinson's argument that the scriptural truth about the universe was analogically represented and this view was shared by all his early followers. The spiritual reading of the Scriptures went hand in hand with analogical reasoning. Hence, commentaries on Genesis were very popular among early Hutchinsonians, to mark the similitude between the scriptural truth and the natural one. The Old Testament was used in Hutchinsonian hands to underline and emphasize their conceptions of the Christian religion, as in their interpretation of the words *Elahim* and *Berith*- a pre-existing covenant between the persons of the Trinity before the universe came into existence. A. S. Catcott, in his sermon preached in 1735, tried to support Hutchinson's ideas on the nature of the Trinity. He chose to go to unpointed Hebrew to

show that the Trinity could be found in the Old Testament. The following chapter will focus on the pamphlet war initiated by Catcott's sermon on the etymology of the Hebrew word *Elahim*.

The early Hutchinsonians thought of themselves as being involved, above all, in the long-standing Trinitarian controversy. The Anti-Trinitarian Plot had to be tackled in a variety of ways because of the various means of assault on trinitarianism. Hutchinson's system provided a valuable tool, a freedom of manoeuvre where they could switch from cosmology to biblical exegesis, from a critique of natural philosophy to a defence of the Eucharist without actually leaving the overarching framework.

One can state that although Hutchinsonian principles did not welcome Newtonian conceptions of the universe or religion, the primary interest of some of the followers of Hutchinson was not simply in being anti-Newtonian. The examples of Duncan Forbes and Benjamin Holloway demonstrate that sympathizers with Hutchinson's ideas thought that arguments could and should be marshalled against all forms of unitarianism or deism. In their minds Newtonianism might be, or might possibly lead to, one form of anti-trinitarian heterodoxy, but it was not the only threat, and in Forbes's case perhaps not really one of the threats at all. Hutchinson's system could be used in any case, being a total assault upon the figureheads of science and religion who were associated with anti-trinitarian/unitarian thought. Even though Forbes and Holloway chose somewhat different strategies, they chose to take on board Hutchinson's ideas and to further his system of thought with their own understanding.

CHAPTER 4

THE CONTROVERSY OVER *ELAHIM*

1735-1773.

This chapter illustrates early Hutchinsonian thinking during a pamphlet war that was initiated by the Hutchinsonian Catcott Senior, Alexander Stopford Catcott, in the year 1736.[253] The importance of Hebraic studies as part of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment debate can hardly be overestimated. The question of the authority of the Books of Scripture forced intellectuals in England to revisit the language of the Old Testament text. The agenda of the Hutchinsonians here was to highlight the Old Testament's trinitarian elements, as they saw them. The controversy over the etymology of the word *Elahim* illustrated that the Hutchinsonians were the Young Turks of orthodoxy in the fight between fideism and rationalism. It also demonstrated the problem the Hutchinsonians represented for those who would otherwise be their trinitarian allies.

Questions over the authority of the Bible kept Newtonians, Hutchinsonians, Methodists, Non-Jurors and Unitarians occupied for the whole of the century and the Old Testament was centre-stage. In the eighteenth-century intellectual context, Hutchinsonians represented a group

[253] For a published version of an account of this pamphlet war, see D. Gurses, 'The Hutchinsonian defence of an Old Testament Christianity: The Controversy over Elahim: 1735-1773,' *History of European Ideas* 29(4) (December, 2003): pp. 393-409.

who tried to support a trinitarian Protestant Christianity from the Old Testament.

The deist literature of the eighteenth century took as its favourite subject the lack of congruence between the New Testament and the Old Testament prophecies. 'The uniqueness of Judaic monotheism'[254] was an essential tenet for Hutchinsonians, whereas the deist literature, provided by individuals such as Herbert of Cherbury, questioned this as well as promoting the universality of natural religion through a comparative history of religion.[255] The likes of Anthony Collins, William Whiston and Matthew Tindal rejected the analogical method used to relate the two books as a continuing revelation. The early Hutchinsonian defence of this method was bolstered by their Hebraic studies and this caused reaction from Christian Hebraists at the time.

The Hutchinsonian method of interpreting the Old Testament attracted interest in the movement among academic circles, such as at Oxford; even new followers who were to carry Hutchinsonian interests on into the nineteenth century took up an interest in Hebrew as their initial Hutchinsonian undertaking. I will deal with the centrality of Hebrew concerns to the Oxford Hutchinsonians in general in the next chapter. Here I will introduce the long-lasting controversy that highlights the use of the Old Testament text to provide a defence of the Trinity.

Hebrew studies were a central concern of the Oxford Hutchinsonians in the middle years of the eighteenth century. They produced some eighteen pamphlets on Hebraic studies between 1750 and 1767. Some of these works

[254] F. Manuel, *The Broken Staff, Judaism Through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992): p. 176.
[255] See *ibid*, pp. 174–91 for the profiles of eighteenth-century English Deists in this matter.

were the lexicons, grammars and dictionaries prepared by Julius Bate, Samuel Pike, William Romaine and John Parkhurst.[256] The best of these was probably the Hebrew–Latin Lexicon prepared by Parkhurst, which was patronized by Horne after he was made a bishop.[257] Jones, in a letter written to Catcott junior on 23 January 1762 stated his pleasure on reading this work:

> 'Have you seen Mr. Parkhurst's book? It is the fruit of great reading and indefatigable attention, and is the only work I ever saw, under the name of a Lexicon, that will bear reading for amusement.'[258]

The *Elahim* Controversy is important in many respects. It shows that the Hutchinsonians were a part of an 'early Enlightenment' debate on the status and language of the Old Testament and that their methods provoked a considerable amount of interest if not universal agreement. Another point which should be pointed out is that Hutchinsonians were quite uncompromising about what they thought was the true method of dealing with the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Their insistence on the monopoly of truth was to become a partial reason for their relative marginality. This intolerant attitude manifested itself especially at the time the controversy took place.

In Catcott's 1736 pamphlet, *The Supreme and Inferior Elahim*,[259] the interpretation of the Old Testament word *Elahim* as the triune God, and the insistence on the unity of the Divinity and Humanity of Christ, were designed to secure the concept of the Trinity from unitarian and other anti-

[256] Julius Bate, *A Hebrew Grammar* (London, 1751), John Parkhurst, *Lexicon* (London, 1762), Samuel Pike, *Hebrew Lexicon* (London, 1766), William Romaine (ed.), *Hebrew Dictionary and Concordance of F. Marius de Calasio* (London, 1746).
[257] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*, p. 107.
[258] William Jones to Catcott Junior, 23 January 1762. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 56.
[259] Alexander Stopford Catcott, *The Supreme and Inferior Elahim* (London, 1736).

trinitarian threats. The Catcott debate continued throughout the 1750s with some changes in its nature and with the participation of Hebraists, pro- and anti-Hutchinsonian. The whole pamphlet war provides valuable information on the reception of Hutchinsonian thinking, and is important in the sense that it was the first time that Hutchinsonians had made their views public. It was also the one and only pamphlet war in which John Hutchinson himself was involved.

Catcott's initial pamphlet set out the trinitarian agenda of early Hutchinsonians. Hebraic studies as a part of biblical exegesis provided an important tool for the defence of the Trinity. The word *Elahim* in the Old Testament was interpreted by Catcott as a plural noun so as to underline the promise of trinitarian Christianity in the Old Testament text. D. B. Ruderman has pointed out that Hebraic studies were a distinguishing Hutchinsonian feature: 'Until the Hutchinsonians had reclaimed the study of Hebrew as their own, to be mastered through their own sacred methods, it was essentially a Jewish discipline.'[260] Although one may want to dispute his argument,[261] I still share Ruderman's view that it was a viable project to establish a novel and correct Hebrew text of the Old Testament for its own sake, and as a part of the effort to lay Christian claim to the Old Testament as revelation.[262] In addition, it is particularly important to note that the long-standing debate between Hutchinsonians and other Christian Hebraists marks

[260] Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment*: p. 36.
[261] For the discussions on providing an authentic text of the Old Testament in the early modern period, see R.A. Muller, 'The Debate over the Vowel Points and the Crisis in Orthodox Hermeneutics,' *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 10 (1980): pp. 53–72. For a summary of how seventeenth-century deists like Le Clerk and oratorians like Richard Simon used Hebrew as a linguistic method for their Old Testament cricitism, see J. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*: pp. 447-56.
[262] Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment*: p. 40.

the difference between a group wanting to claim the Old Testament in order to enhance a trinitarian Christian identity and those who thought the Hutchinsonians went too far in searching for explicit trinitarianism in the Old Testament, though agreeing with the Hutchinsonians about the necessity to provide a good unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The roots of the clash between Hutchinsonians and Hebraists such as Thomas Sharp and Benjamin Kennicott lie in this difference of intention, which will be discussed further below. An assessment of these confrontations in matters such as biblical exegesis and Hebraic studies will provide a valuable tool for suggesting peculiarly Hutchinsonian traits.

The difference of method between Hutchinsonians and other Hebraists first became apparent with the publication of Catcott's sermon, ***The Supreme and Inferior Elahim***, in which it was made clear that the Hutchinsonians welcomed neither other languages nor pointed Hebrew in elucidating the original text of the Old Testament and its meanings. When Hutchinsonians wrote commentaries on certain words in the Old Testament such as ***Elahim***, traditional Hebraists were alarmed by the way they treated the text. Catcott, in his Sermon, concentrated on the plural and singular usages of the word Elahim, which he referred to as 'supreme and inferior'. When used in the plural, or as Catcott put it, before the Jews had corrupted the text by pointing and reducing it to a singular noun, Elahim signified the Triune God. If one reads the Genesis account, for example, having this in mind, then it would appear Catcott was arguing that the Triune God created the three agents, fire, light and spirit, before the creation of the universe. So the trinitarian promise in the Old Testament was completely justified. He and

his fellow Hutchinsonians insisted that the ways in which Christianity was promised in the Old Testament were simply not negotiable: Hutchinson thought he had reformed the Christian religion and had opened the doors of revelation, not only for the Jews, but for Christians as well, by getting rid of the points that had been inserted by Rabbis to undermine the truth.

Hutchinsonians such as Robert Spearman and Julius Bate argued that Christians should deal with the Hebrew Bible as the written language of God, and they insisted that this language did not involve points. So Hutchinsonians developed a peculiar way of studying Hebrew roots, which considered all possible permutations of a single Hebrew root as related to each other. Hutchinson used Hebrew as a 'code-book containing the secrets of the universe'. In his method, as D. S. Katz observes, 'consonants themselves could be constituted into words by the use of any vowels which happened to fit, so as to give the text a variety of meanings'.[263] For example, the words 'gravity' and 'glory' had common roots, which led Hutchinson to argue that it was divine will —exhibiting itself as a material force thereby allowing it to act mechanically — which caused objects to fall to the ground, rather than any occult or non-mechanistic force such as the Newtonian concept of gravity. A reviewer of Bate's work *The Integrity of the Hebrew Text* summarized the basic argument made by him on the use of original Hebrew:

> This piece is introduced with a short view of the argument for the genuineness of the books in the Old Testament, which, according to the author, are not only records of our faith, but the repository of all learning, natural and divine, and the evidence for the New Testament.[264]

[263] D. S. Katz, 'The Occult Bible: Hebraic Millenarianism in Eighteenth-Century England,' in James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin (eds.), *The Millenarian Turn: Millenarian Contexts of Science, Politics, and everyday Anglo-American Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Dortrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001): pp. 119–33.
[264] *Monthly Review* for February, 1755: pp. 81-83.

Another Hutchinsonian, Robert Spearman, argued along similar lines: 'Judaism and Christianity are but different names for one and the same belief, and it was not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles that the gospel brought life and immortality to light.'[265]

4.1. The First phase of the debate

The main idea of Catcott's sermon centred on the argument about the pre-existing covenant between the persons of the Trinity before the universe came into existence. The controversy, however, was going to be centred on the etymology of the word *Elahim* and its interpretation by Hutchinsonians as 'the Trinity'. Catcott explained the method he used to interpret the word *Elahim* as Trinity in the preliminary pages of his treatise. Basically what Catcott did was to take the word and insert it in certain passages of the Bible to have a general idea as to the sense in which *Elahim* should be used:

> As a verb [it] signifies to confirm by oath, to bind a person to fulfil certain terms under the penalty of a conditional malediction; as a name or appellation, when applied to a person: a swearer to a covenant, as a noun: an oath: it occurs about forty times in scripture, and always in this sense.[266]

Catcott argued that when a word like Elahim expressing an action occurs in the Old Testament, it should be traced 'up to the first and chief action of the agent'. 'This gives the full idea, which will be found in some degree in all other inferior usages of the word'[267]

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[265] Robert Spearman, *An Enquiry after Philosophy and Theology, Tending to show When and Whence Mankind came at the knowledge of these two important points* (Edinburgh, 1755): p. 14.
[266] Catcott, *Elahim*: p. 10
[267] *Ibid.*

When he applied this rule to certain passages in the Biblical text he ended up with: 'In the beginning the Elahim (plural) created (singular) the substance of the heavens and the substance of the earth.'[268] The way Catcott interpreted all this was that:

> That those persons (for the word is plural) who created the world, had (before the action of creation) performed an act before the creation of the universe, and that these Elahim, these swearers to a covenant, were Jehovah.[269]

Catcott, then went on to explain the word Jehovah: 'it is compounded of …Jah, the essence, and …hovah, to exert powers, so it signifies being with powers.'[270] So Catcott argued that Jehovah Elahim was the essence existing with the powers, and those powers which were Elahim were the Trinity.

The immediate response came from Arthur Bedford, Catcott's predecessor as the vicar of the Temple Church (from which he had resigned in 1713), who published a pamphlet called *Observations on a Sermon* in the year 1736, immediately following the publication of Catcott's *The Supreme and Inferior Elahim.* Bedford at the very beginning of the pamphlet stated that when he first read the title page of the sermon by Catcott he thought the word *Elohim* was written wrongly as *Elahim*:

> But when I found it ninety-three times used in the same Sermon, and always spelt in the same manner, I then perceived it was a mistake of my own, or (pardon the expression) of the learned author.[271]

[268] Catcott, *Elahim*: p. 11.
[269] *Ibid.*
[270] *Ibid.*
[271] Arthur Bedford, *Observations on a Sermon* (London, 1736): p. 1.

Bedford was puzzled by the presentation of the word *Elahim* as the representation of the persons in the Trinity. Bedford argued instead that the word *Elohim*, as he put it, was:

> derived from the Arabick verb Alaha, which signifies to worship religiously, and that it is "a particle" of the passive voice, and signifies that Being, who alone is religiously to be worshipped.[272]

Hutchinson tended not to approve of the usage of related languages to suggest meanings for the words in Hebrew. In defence of Catcott, Hutchinson, in his *Remarks on the Observations*, accused Bedford of wrongly judging *Elahim* to be singular and to signify God and God alone, not the Triune existence.[273] He bluntly accused Bedford of using Newtonian and Heathen arguments.[274] Bedford had argued that Oriental languages were the nearest kin to Hebrew, a fact which Hutchinson disputed. This attitude towards other languages was going to be a trademark feature of Hutchinsonians in their later discussions with Hebraists such as Thomas Sharp and Benjamin Kennicott. The Hutchinsonian insistence that the Hebrew of the Old Testament was the original, revealed language and that 'corrupt' languages could not be used to suggest its meaning was essential for their promotion of the Old Testament's trinitarian promise. Any possible use of other languages would undermine the strength of their argument. The highest sin against the Holy Ghost, Hutchinson argued, was to deny Hebrew as the Original Language.[275]

The Hutchinsonian interpretation of the Old Testament was founded in their perception of how theological speculation must be conducted. Those

[272] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[273] John Hutchinson, *Remarks on the Observations* (London, 1737): p. 48.
[274] *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[275] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

who believed in revealed religion should accordingly have perceived the Trinity, argued Hutchinson. As he addressed Bedford he made it clear from which directions he expected opposition to his interpretation:

> Do you profess natural or revealed religion, if revealed, as you strive to evade the Essence in Christ, and mention not the Holy Ghost, you ought to have told us, whether Revelation was given to Men by Angels who draw near to the Divine Majesty, and with whom your brother Mohammed pretended to correspond or by the Spirit that is in your comrades, the Quakers.[276]

Although the backbone of the Catcott controversy was the etymology suggested for the word *Elahim* by Hutchinsonians – or *Elohim* as their critics insisted — the controversy, which lasted until the 1760s, displayed a theological tension between Hutchinsonians and non-Hutchinsonians. It was the repeated accusation of Deism, Unitarianism or Arianism by Hutchinson and some of his followers that contributed to the unpopularity of Hutchinsonians.

The impact of Catcott's sermon and the reputation of Hutchinsonian system can be observed by some correspondence concerning the subject and in the periodicals of the time. On 24 January 1738, the Reverend Charles Wheatley wrote to Dr. Rawlinson about Catcott's *Elahim.* It appears from the letter that there was a certain degree of caution on Wheatley's side about accepting the Hutchinsonian method:

> A feeder on *Roots*; but with him I could heartily take a meal, and twice in my time have had stomach to digest them; but fool as I was, disused myself to them. But I hope they would not have turned my brain, as they seem to have done my fellow collegians. But it is dangerous to enter upon new schemes, when nature is nearer its decline than its spring.[277]

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[276] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[277] Quoted in *An Annotated Catalogue of the Works of Alexander Stopford Catcott LLB and of his Sons*, Bristol Reference Library, Ref. no. 28011. Charles Wheatley was the author of *Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*.

In the 9 October 1736 issue of the *Craftsman*, Catcott's sermon was mentioned as being 'most remarkable'. The writer of this piece appreciated Catcott's opposition to Jewish pointed texts of the Old Testament, but clearly had some doubts about the value of this Hutchinsonian obsession:

> This ancient and Bible way of writing that most significant and revered Hebrew word, savouring too much of the Masora, to please the squeamish palates of the most profound disciples of the self-sufficient J. H[utchinson].[278]

But there were sympathisers with Catcott too. Thomas Fry, D.D., later president of St John's College, Oxford, wrote to Catcott concerning the publication of Bedford's *Observations* and assured him that the book was not sent to Oxford for circulation: 'I have perused that scandalous libel published against your sermon…. I hear of none that were sent to the Oxford Booksellers.'[279]

In 1738, Bedford published another attack on both Hutchinson and Catcott.[280] Hutchinson, Bedford argued, had presented himself as the first person since 'the Inspiration ceased,' eight years after the New Testament was finished, to recover the true sense of the Holy Scriptures.[281] Bedford's arguments came across as direct insults, almost as harsh as Hutchinson's, rather than as substantial criticisms. Catcott's last tract in the debate was a twenty-four-page pamphlet called *The State of the Case between Mr. Bedford and Mr. Catcott, in Answer to Mr. Bedford's Examination*.[282] This pamphlet

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[278] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[279] T. Fry to A. S. Catcott, 29 October. Bristol Reference Library. ***Annotated Catalogue.*** Thomas Fry received his education at the Grammar School in Bristol when A. S. Catcott was the Head Master and became the President of St. John's College, Oxford.
[280] Arthur Bedford, *An examination of Mr. Hutchinson's remarks, and Mr. Catcott's answer by the author of the Observations* (London, 1738).
[281] *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
[282] Alexander Stopford Catcott, *The State of the Case between Mr. Bedford and Mr. Catcott, in Answer to Mr. Bedford's Examination* (London, 1738).

included a summary of the debate and could be regarded as Catcott's last attempt to defend the Hutchinsonian scheme.

In 1739, Daniel Gittins, Rector of South Stoke near Arundel, joined the controversy.[283] Gittins's pamphlet was basically a defence of the Hutchinsonian method. In February 1738 Bate had introduced Gittins to Catcott as a neighbour of his and an admirer of Hutchinson.[284] Gittins began corresponding with Catcott nine months after Bate's introduction. In November 1738 Gittins made it clear that he was going to 'attempt something (however unworthily) by way of answer to this infamous pamphlet,' referring to Bedford's *An examination*. Gittins based his defence of Hutchinsonian concept of the Trinity as manifested in the Old Testament on the argument that the Cambridge Platonist, Henry More, had also similar ideas on the subject of ***Elahim***.[285] More himself had been enthusiastic about the Kabbala and was very much into the reading of Knorr von Rosenroth, whose *Kabbala Denudata* had been used later by Hutchinson himself as well.[286]

The belief among Hutchinson's followers that they had reformed the religion, or at least continued the Reformation, manifested itself in tracts written during the controversy. Hutchinson in his answer to Bedford stated that: 'The difficulty lies upon each who reforms, to substitute what is not only better, but what is not liable to any material objection in its stead: When

[283] Daniel Gittins, *An Answer to a Pamphlet entitled An Examination of Mr. Hutchinson's Remarks and Mr. Catcott's Answer* (London, 1739).
[284] Julius Bate to Catcott Senior, 17 February 1738. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 27.
[285] Gittins, *An Answer*, p. 21. Gittins's reference was to Henry More *Theological Works* (London, 1708) Book 3. Ch.1.
[286] See D. S. Katz, 'Abendana Brothers and the Christian Hebraists of Seventeenth Century England,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 40 (1989): pp. 28–52, for a general discussion of the seventeenth-century background to Hebraic studies in England including that at the colleges in Oxford where Hutchinsonians such as Horne and Jones were educated later.

such a one appears, and performs it, it is no wonder, that every dog barks at him.'[287] When Bate published his reply to Bedford in 1739. He argued that the Hutchinsonian method of dealing with the Hebrew of the Old Testament text was revolutionary: 'The Reformation began, and must subsist upon an impartial Search into the Original Scripture' [288]

In 1741 Daniel Gittins published another pamphlet against Bedford.[289] His basic argument against Bedford was that the Hutchinsonian concept of *Elahim* could be derived from the Old Testament, and that Bedford's efforts to confute Hutchinson and Catcott were useless. Bedford in a series of sermons published in 1741 mentioned the Hutchinsonian conception of the Trinity and criticized it for the last time.[290] Bedford did not agree with the argument of Hutchinsonians that Jews had added the vowel points 'in the second century to obscure the Doctrines of Christianity, particularly of Trinity and Incarnation'.[291] Bedford was also very much offended by the argument that the only true method of handling the Scripture was that proposed by Hutchinson.

Although Bedford provided an important critique of Hutchinsonianism with his participation in the Catcott controversy, it was the Hebraists, Thomas Sharp and Benjamin Kennicott, who treated the subject specifically as a debate on Hebrew and who investigated the Hutchinsonian method of interpretation in detail.

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[287] Hutchinson, *Remarks*: p. 171.
[288] Julius Bate, *The Examiner Examined; or the Examination of the Remarks upon, and Mr. Catcott's Answer to the Observations upon his Sermon considered* (London, 1739): p. iv.
[289] Daniel Gittins, *Observations on Some Sermons preached at Lady Moyer's Lectures* (London, 1741).
[290] Arthur Bedford, *A Defence of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation of the Son of God, From the Testimony of the Most Ancient Jews in Eight Sermons Preached at the Lady Moyer's Lecture in the Cathedral-Church of St. Paul* (London, 1741).
[291] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

The deaths of Hutchinson and Catcott put an end to the first phase of the debate. When Thomas Sharp, Archdeacon of Northumberland and Prebendary of Durham, biographer and theological writer, joined the debate, the first phase of the *Elahim* controversy was well known among intellectual circles. William Warburton discussed the Hutchinsonian method in a letter to Bishop Hurd in 1750. Talking about the people dealing with the unpointed text of the Old Testament, Warburton mentioned Hutchinsonians as a part of this 'fashionable madness': 'The Hutchinsonians pretend that the reason of all the institutions in the Mosaic Law, is to be found in the mysteries of the Hebrew roots'.[292] Although Warburton's intentions were critical, he was however aware that the Hutchinsonian attitude towards the history of religion was designed specifically against the deist literature of the time. The study of Jewish customs and religion was popular among the deists of the eighteenth century for the purpose of showing that Judaism borrowed most of its aspects from pagan religion. The central idea of the deists of eighteenth-century England was that natural religion had a universal appeal in contrast to what revelation had to offer.[293] In contrast to the deist view, the Hutchinsonians endeavoured to show that a true believer could read this history of religion properly, showing that Old Testament prophecies led to Trinitarian Christianity and that even the heathen rites and symbols of the deity pointed towards the Trinity. Hebraic studies were part of the plan to strengthen the Christian promise in the Old Testament against the deists' assault.

[292] William Warburton, *Letters from a late eminent Prelate (W.W.) to one of his friends [Bishop Hurd]* (London, 1809): pp. 58–9.
[293] Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*: p. 604, p. 620.

4.2. The Second phase of the debate: Thomas Sharp

In 1751, Thomas Sharp published a commentary on Catcott's conception of the word *Elahim* which had touched his own Hebraist concerns.[294] The British Library manuscript copy of Sharp's pamphlet has an attached letter from Sharp to Spearman written in September 1750 before the publication. Both Sharp and Spearman were natives of Durham and had a long-lasting acquaintance. Sharp's tone in this letter is very respectful: he reminds Spearman of the occasion when the two discussed Catcott's sermon 'in the Winter of 1747' and Spearman's tolerant behaviour towards the criticism Sharp had put forward against Catcott and his Hutchinsonian ideas. Sharp on occasion declared his respect for Hutchinson's 'genius and his application extraordinary'.[295] However, as an experienced Hebraist himself, Sharp felt the need to clarify some points: 'In the printed controversy that arose from Mr. Catcott's Sermon the merits of the question were not, in my opinion, sufficiently attended to, or fully reached.'[296]

Sharp was one of several Hebraists who were alarmed by the way Hutchinsonians treated the text in their commentary on certain words such as *Elahim* in the Old Testament. The use of other languages was not accepted by Hutchinsonians, and the pointed text of the Old Testament was not allowed as evidence for the interpretation of the originally unpointed words. As far as Sharp was concerned, the Hutchinsonian method was stretched too far to justify their arguments on the trinitarian promise in the Old Testament.

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[294] Thomas Sharp, *Two Dissertations concerning the Meaning of the Hebrew words Elohim and Berith, occasioned by some notions lately advanced in Relation to them* (London, 1751).
[295] Thomas Sharp to Robert Spearman, September 1750. British Library. Additional Manuscripts 4369, ff. 2-14.
[296] *Ibid.*

Sharp's criticisms were immediately followed by a Hutchinsonian response. With this second phase of the debate, we see different persons joining the pamphlet war against Sharp. The first reply came from David Aboab, a Venetian Jew later converted to Christianity, and a Hutchinsonian.[297] Julius Bate and Benjamin Holloway followed Aboab.[298] Holloway, with his customary claim to an independent position, did not become very involved with Hutchinsonian terminology, but found a way to criticize Sharp through his studies in Oriental languages. As a reaction to Sharp's comparison of Hebrew with Arabic, concluding that the word *Elahim* had a singular root implying one God, Holloway argued disapprovingly: 'I hear this language, made at every turn, sister to the Hebrew, yes, often, its mother, and preferred before it'.[299] Bate, in his attack, criticized Sharp's questioning of Hebrew's being the most ancient and holy tongue. The Hutchinsonian assertion that Hebrew was the tongue of God would remain as a source of their argument all through the debate and was stressed by them at almost every turn.

The only support for Sharp came from George Kalmar, whose three pamphlets in this controversy were directed against Julius Bate, Benjamin Holloway and David Aboab.[300] Kalmar, like Sharp, questioned the Hutchinsonians' certainty that the Hebrew Old Testament was the original and unchanging language of revelation:

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[297] David Aboab, *Remarks on Dr. Sharp's Two Dissertations* (London, 1751).
[298] Julius Bate, *The Scripture Meaning of Aleim and Berith* (London, 1751); Benjamin Holloway, *Remarks on Dr. Sharp's Pieces on the Words Elohim and Berith* (Oxford, 1751).
[299] Holloway, *Remarks*: p. 33.
[300] George Kalmar, *Mr. Bate's answer to Sharp's two Dissertations answered* (London, 1751); *A short Reply to Mr. Holloway's Remarks on Dr. Sharp's two Dissertations* (London, 1751); *Censurer Censured: Or a defence of Dr. Sharp's two Dissertations &c. Being a Reply to Mr. Aboab's Remarks* (London, 1751).

> Can he [Holloway] tell me then what language (Abraham), Moses and David talked and wrote in? Language which he thinks of Paradise always? Or, if they used sometimes Chaldee or Syriac, &c; how can he tell me which is this or that?[301]

The phase of the debate involving Sharp attracted much publicity. Many issues of the *Monthly Review* and *Gentleman's Magazine* were full of pro- and anti-Hutchinsonian writings on the subject.[302] David Levi (1740–99), a Jewish Hebrew scholar, treated the controversy in the introduction to his work on Hebrew, *Lingua Sacra*. He introduced the subject by giving references to the participants of the debate. Levi, through careful research, compiled a list of those persons who had worked on the 'Christian interpretation of Elohim as alluding to the Trinity'.[303] Among 'the English Clerics,' he included Dr. Matthew Henry (1662–1714), author of the six-volume *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments,* and John Gill (1697–1771). After a long assessment of the debate between the Hutchinsonians and Sharp, Levi concluded his survey of the subject with his own point of view:

> I must freely confess my astonishment … in thus building the doctrine of Trinity upon so slight a foundation: for allowing the noun Eloeheem to be plural, even when applied to the Deity, yet, what proof hath he produced, that plurality implies Trinity and no more. I may as well advance, that it implies two, two hundred, or two thousand, and so on ad infinitum.[304]

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[301] Kalmar, *Short Reply*: pp. 16–17.
[302] *Gentleman's Magazine*: 'Mr. Moody's treatise on Elohim and Berith,' May 1752: p. 205; 'Objections against the Hutchinsonian account of the Cherubim,' June 1752: p. 259; 'Objections to Hutchinsonians,' July 1752: p. 316; 'Letter in defense of the Hutchinsonian sense of Cherubim,' August 1752: p. 354; 'Further remarks on the Hutchinsonians,' September 1752: pp. 415–16; 'Hutchinsonian opinion of Goodness, Intellect and Power defended,' November 1752: p. 52; 'Candidus on the Hutchinsonian controversy,' December 1752: pp. 549–50.
[303] Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment*: p. 71.
[304] David Levi, *Lingua Sacra in Three Parts* (London, 1785–87), Part II, vol. 1, entry 'Elohea, God' (no pagination).

Although Levi expressed his disapproval of Hutchinson's method, he was careful not to get involved in controversy with the Hutchinsonians. Sharp showed his regret at getting into the polemical debate over *Elahim* as early as 1750 in a letter to a friend:

> I shall scarcely surprise you with telling you … that I have been fool enough to risk my Hebrew scraps amongst the Hutchinsonians. Indeed I have little to say for myself, but that I was persuaded to do so by some people much wiser than myself in those matters.[305]

The Hutchinsonian response to Sharp came also from a newly flourishing Oxford community of followers. Walter Hodges, one of the first Oxonian followers of Hutchinson, published his first assessment of the subject in 1752.[306] However, in another letter written in 1754, Sharp wanted to explain his reasons for engaging in such a confrontation with the Hutchinsonians:

> I should not have given myself any trouble, even about Mr. Hutchinson's, if he and his followers had not set it up as the first article in revealed religion, spoke of it as indisputably proved, and reflected on the whole Christian world for not acknowledging it sooner.[307]

As much as he was disturbed by the Hutchinsonian claim to the monopoly of true method, Sharp did not totally withdraw from the arena. In 1755 he published another pamphlet on Hebrew[308] and had a reply from the Hutchinsonians.[309] In his correspondence, Sharp expressed his disappointment with Hutchinsonian strictness in dealing with unadorned,

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[305] John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Nichols, Son and Bentley, 1812), vol. 4: p. 352.
[306] Walter Hodges, *The Christian Plan, exhibited in the interpretation of Elohim: with Observations upon a few other matters and expressions relative to the same subject* (Oxford,1752).
[307]Thomas Sharp to Zechariah Grey, Durham, 27 December 1754. in Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*: p. 352.
[308] Thomas Sharp, *Discourses touching the Antiquity of the Hebrew Tongue and Character* (London, 1755).
[309] Walter Hodges, *Reflections* (Oxford, 1755).

unpointed Hebrew. As to the interpretation of the words, Sharp openly stated that: 'I wish we had better authority for it than the Jewish writers'.[310] In the absence of such authority, he was prepared to accept that there was room for doubt: 'Conjectures, when evidence is wanting, are always acceptable.'[311] This, obviously, was not compatible with the Hutchinsonian refusal to accept rational debate in matters of biblical exegesis.

Julius Bate in his reply to Sharp made it quite clear what kind of offence those who criticized Hutchinson were guilty of. His words are representative of the dogmatic Hutchinsonian attitude:

> It is easy now to see the source of the opposition Mr. Hutchinson has met with on this head. Jews, Arians and Socinians, deny a Trinity, the Divinity of Christ.[312]

Benjamin Kennicott was also to complain of being similarly accused because his method in dealing with the Old Testament text differed from that of the Hutchinsonians.

4.3. The Third Phase: Benjamin Kennicott

What gave the *Elahim* controversy its cutting edge was the complete intolerance of their opponents shown by the Hutchinsonians. In the name of reforming the religion, the Hutchinsonians accused various thinkers of being either Arian, deist, or at times infidels. Eventually this was going to change and the later eighteenth century was going to witness a Hutchinsonian agenda which was basically more moderate, aimed towards uniting orthodoxy, rather than at confronting everybody, in order to get their point

[310] Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. 4: p. 352.
[311] *Ibid.*
[312] Julius Bate, *A Reply to Dr. Sharp's Review and Defence of his Dissertations on the Scripture Meaning of Aleim and Berith* (London, 1755): p. 161.

across. George Horne is a name to mention here, pioneering this later moderation. However the years of the *Elahim* controversy represented the period when Hutchinsonian intolerance was still in full flood.

The biggest clash came with the Oxford Hebraist, Benjamin Kennicott, who had set himself the task of preparing the best possible unpointed text of the Old Testament. Kennicott tried to reclaim the Hebrew text for Christians by liberating it from the unchallenged authorities of the 'rabbies' by a systematic collection of Hebrew manuscripts and a comprehensive study of ancient translations. Kennicott compared different manuscripts of the Hebrew texts in a scholarly fashion. After tracing 615 Hebrew manuscripts and sixteen manuscripts of the *Samaritan Pentateuch*, he began publishing his version in 1776 (*The Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum Variis Lectionibus* (1776–80)).

The Hutchinsonians were Kennicott's most enthusiastic antagonists. The aims of the two opposing sides were on some points similar, e.g. providing an unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The argument of the Hutchinsonians was that:

> Christians should confront the Hebrew Bible directly as the continuing revelation of God, unmediated by Jewish interpretations of Scripture, and divested of the vowel points invented by modern Jews to mislead Christians in understanding their own sacred scriptures.[313]

Kennicott would probably not have disagreed with this. However, he certainly did disagree with the enforcement of an explicitly trinitarian interpretation onto the text by Hutchinsonians and with the Hutchinsonian rejection of any idea that their might be variant unpointed texts.

[313] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Julius Bate's *The Integrity of the Hebrew Text*, published in London in 1754, is a fine example of the Hutchinsonian approach to Kennicott's project. Bate published several works in defence of Hutchinsonianism, including *Critica Hebraea or a Hebrew-English Dictionary without Points*, which appeared in 1767. Bate opened his pamphlet against Kennicott by:

> Railing against his temerity of correcting the sacred pages of Scripture with the same 'vague and licentious spirit of criticism' that has plagued the new readers of Shakespeare and Pope.[314]

Bate was not the only Hutchinsonian who felt compelled to ravage Kennicott. Fowler Comings in 1753 attacked Kennicott on the same grounds as Bate did.[315]

The essence of the Hutchinsonian charge against Kennicott was that, in playing fast and loose with the letter the way, as the Hutchinsonians accused Kennicott of doing, destroyed the possibility of a spiritual interpretation as far as Hutchinsonians were concerned. However, the form of the criticism upset Kennicott a great deal. He published *A Word to the Hutchinsonians* in 1756. Kennicott pointed out the danger of the Hutchinsonian claim to be reformers of the religion. He also complained that the Hutchinsonians insulted whoever criticized them with Arianism or some other form of anti-trinitarianism. He complained that Hutchinsonians made 'words signify what they please…with all such meanings as were never meant.'[316] Unfortunately, whoever stood in the Hutchinsonians' way had the misfortune of being accused of contributing to the rise of infidelity. Kennicott had his first reply from a young and still relatively intolerant

[314] Bate, *Integrity of the Hebrew Text*: p. vi.
[315] Fowler Comings, *The Printed Hebrew Text of the Old Testament Vindicated. An Answer to Mr. Kennicott's Dissertation in two parts* (Oxford, 1753).
[316] Benjamin Kennicott, *A Word to the Hutchinsonians* (London, 1756): p. 5.

Horne, in 1756. It was in direct opposition to Kennicott's claim to have assembled the genuine Hebrew text of the Old Testament.[317] Horne published his second attack against Kennicott's design in 1760 and argued that his method of dealing with the Old Testament would open the door to scepticism and infidelity 'which all the art of man will never be able to shut again'.[318] Ruderman's suggestion as to the offence Kennicott caused to Horne and other Hutchinsonians is valid: 'By destabilizing the text, Kennicott had undermined the force of their unique exegesis that rested on the assumption that the Hebrew text was fixed and standardized.'[319] In the Hutchinsonian view Kennicott was guilty of undermining the revealed language and the more he did so, by preoccupying himself with establishing the letter from variant texts, the further he abandoned the truth of the religion. In a proper Pauline fashion Hutchinsonians argued that what gave life to the text was its spirit and at the heart of the matter lay the Trinitarian promise.

The debate between the Hutchinsonians and Benjamin Kennicott was well publicized. The coverage given to the controversy by the *Gentleman's Magazine* between 1751 and 1753 demonstrates the interest shown by the intellectual circles of the time in the Hutchinsonian movement and the debate. There were a considerable number of non-Hutchinsonians who felt compelled to publish on the subject. One of them was Anselm Bayly. His criticism of Kennicott's project and appreciation of the Hutchinsonian denial

[317] George Horne, *An Apology for certain gentlemen in the University of Oxford, aspersed in a late anonymous pamphlet entitled 'A Word to the Hutchinsonians'* (Oxford, 1756). The second edition appeared in 1799.
[318] George Horne, *A View of Mr. Kennicott's Method of Correcting the Hebrew Text* (London, 1760): p. 24.
[319] Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment*: p. 35.

of 'pointing' became apparent when he published *A Plain and Complete Grammar of the Hebrew Language With and Without Points* in 1773. Apart from his criticism of Kennicott, his way of introducing John Hutchinson to the reader is quite telling:

> He opposed the points with greater warmth than Capellus and stood up for the correctness of the Hebrew writings, with more zeal than even Buxtorf … [He] proposed to open a wider path to the Hebrew; he professed to enter into the language more profoundly than any that preceded him, with a eye to philosophy as well as divinity.[320]

The reputation of Hutchinsonians was linked primarily to their biblical exegesis based on the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The spread of Hutchinsonian ideas into Oxford was partly due to the 1748 edition of Hutchinson's works, but also partly related to the publicity created by the long-lasting *Elahim* debate among intellectual circles of the time.

The confrontation of an orthodox movement such as Hutchinsonianism with the proponents of natural religion or with anyone who threw doubt on the certainty and completeness of the revealed text represented a clash of forces within the Enlightenment, one fideistic, one rationalist, yet both part of the eighteenth-century intellectual agenda. One thing to stress is that different sections of eighteenth-century thought, rationalist and fideists alike, found something to argue about in this debate. The preoccupation with Judaism and its text in this period is an invitation to historians of the eighteenth century to reconsider the parameters of the Enlightenment paradigm.

The eighteenth-century Hebraists – Christian and Jewish alike – found it difficult to accept the Hutchinsonian dogmatic insistence on the self-

[320] Quoted in Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment*: p. 43.

sufficiency of the unpointed Hebrew. The Hutchinsonian approach of using and interpreting an untainted Old Testament text in unpointed Hebrew triumphed as the basis. However, comparative linguistics as a method of establishing this text, as promoted by Kennicott and Sharp, in the end triumphed over the Hutchinsonian spiritual method of interpreting what was to them a fixed and certain unpointed text. The direction that Hebraic studies was taking by the 1760s pointed towards a more comparative approach, such as that of Kennicott, where not only a variety of manuscripts of the Old Testament were examined for a more accurate account, but also comparison was to be made with other Oriental languages such as Arabic in order to ascertain meanings.

By the 1780s, Hebraic studies ceased to be the main tool for the Hutchinsonian defence of the Trinity. Essentially, they had lost that argument. Hebraic studies were important to Hutchinsonians as a necessary part of their compact defence and re-assertion of trinitarian Christianity. Hence, such a loss was a hard blow for the coherence of the system of thought. Hutchinsonian intolerance, which must take part of the blame in their demise, was to go through remarkable change in the following years. George Horne can be regarded as the man who tried most to moderate the Hutchinsonian profile. William Jones's letter to his biographer William Stevens testifies to this notable change. Jones stated that Horne wrote against Kennicott's plan 'without any fear or reserve,' but went on to explain that 'from the moderation and farther experience of both parties,….though the acquaintance began in hostility, they at length contracted a

friendship.'[321] *Jones himself being Horne's biographer, knew about the later Horne and his feelings then about Hutchinsonian militancy. Horne, on one occasion stated that:*

> *Mankind are tired and sick (I am sure I am one) with the fruitless squabbles and altercations about etymologies and particularities. In the meantime, the great plan of philosophy and theology, that must instruct and edify, lies dormant.*[322]

The next chapter will be devoted to an examination of how this tendency towards moderation came into being. As the forerunners of an attempt to moderate the profile of the movement, the Oxford Hutchinsonians were to play a significant role.

[321] William Stevens ed., *Collected Works of William Jones of Nayland* (London, 1801): vol. 12, p.xi.
[322] George Horne, quoted in Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: pp. 55-56.

CHAPTER 5

ACADEMIC HUTCHINSONIANS AND THEIR QUEST FOR RELEVANCE: 1734–1770

This chapter is devoted to the subject of the dissemination of Hutchinson's ideas among Oxford University circles. An examination of the Oxford group of Hutchinsonians as a part of a study of Hutchinsonianism is necessary in many respects. There is a gap in the histories of the movement that can be filled by a consideration of the Oxford group: how they became exposed to Hutchinson's teaching, the ways in which they were inspired by it, the ways in which their interest developed. Here I should make it clear that among the Oxford group, I include the members of Oxford University from the 1730s to the 1790s, and especially the graduates of Oxford who were contemporaries and acquaintances of William Jones and George Horne, such as Alexander Catcott, that is Catcott Junior.

One reason for such a focus is that this group was better known in intellectual circles compared to any other Hutchinsonians; another is that their Hutchinsonianism represents a continuation of Hutchinsonian concerns, but also the beginnings of the breakdown of what had been a compact and coherent system of thought into something more attuned to individuals' preferences. This should be seen as a gradual change, more a change in emphasis than any explicit rejection of parts of the system.

After providing information on the transmission of Hutchinsonian interests to the Oxford group, I will try to explain the reasons why some Hutchinsonian undertakings became less attractive to the group and began to be left fallow. My suggestion will be that Hutchinsonians such as Horne and Jones were engaged in an effort to moderate the Hutchinsonian public profile. The later eighteenth century was going to witness a Hutchinsonian agenda that had become basically moderate, aimed towards uniting orthodoxy, rather than at confronting all non-Hutchinsonians with verbal violence, in order to get a refocused Hutchinsonianism across to a wider audience.

The Oxford group occupied a transitional role, linking the early followers of Hutchinson and the later ones. The Oxford following was active between the 1730s and the 1790s. Oxford Hutchinsonianism initially exhibited all the traits of early Hutchinsonianism in general — the trinitarian agenda, the anti-Newtonianism, and most of all a concentration on the Hebrew of the Old Testament. However, the interests of the Oxford followers shifted over time. While the early Oxford followers were willing to understand and embrace the whole trinitarian system as offered by Hutchinson, the later ones differed from the likes of Julius Bate and Robert Spearman by each taking up some aspects of Hutchinsonianism within a wider, not exclusively Hutchinsonian, set of ideas. Also, while most of the Oxford Hutchinsonians began their careers by engaging in the Hutchinsonian Hebraic enterprise, later on Hebrew ceased to be a major tool in Oxford Hutchinsonian hands. The grand project of defending trinitarian Protestant Christianity remained their goal however. The chronology of events relating

to this will be presented here and it will be shown how Hebrew became less relevant to the interests of the Hutchinsonians after the 1770s. To some extent, the reasons for this aspect of the change in the nature of Oxford Hutchinsonianism have already been illustrated in the previous chapter on the *Elahim* controversy.

The anti-Newtonian aspect of the movement soon transmitted itself to the Oxford circle. In their early careers, as will be seen, George Horne, Catcott Junior and William Jones were very much interested in taking up the anti-Newtonian cause. However, for some, this evolved into, or perhaps even out of, a more general interest in natural philosophy that continued to exhibit itself. The scientific enquiries of Catcott Junior and Jones's interest in natural philosophy as a whole illustrate an increasing preoccupation with extending particular aspects of the system, but such developing interests differed from individual to individual. The friendship of Jones and Horne demonstrates their mutual interest in the theological aspects of the movement, but Horne, in his later years, unlike Jones, altogether dropped the philosophical and cosmological aspects of interest.

An analysis of how these followers perceived Hutchinson will be incorporated into this discussion in order to support the argument that Hutchinson's grand design did not lose all of its importance in the eyes of the Oxford group. The suggestion that Hutchinson ceased to be an influence on later followers will be disputed by an analysis of the careers of Jones, Horne and Catcott Junior. On the other hand, what is true is that they do begin to use a wider range of writers as sources and support for their ideas.

The reception of Hutchinsonian ideas in Oxford began while Hutchinson and his early followers were active. In the previous chapter, we observed that Hutchinsonians were involved in the debate on Hebrew etymologies as a part of their defence of the trinitarian basis of Christianity. The Oxford circle, too, shared and indeed seem to have been attracted to the movement by this Hutchinsonian concern with Hebrew studies. Nor was this a brief phase; the debate with Kennicott over Hebrew, in the 1750s and '60s occurred at the time when Hutchinsonians were still gaining ground in the university.

In a study of the history of Oxford University, D. Patterson has noted that the only other university that had a chair in Hebrew was Trinity College, Dublin.[323] In Cambridge, as Wordsworth observed: 'the formal teaching of the language seems by the mid-eighteenth century to have become desultory, being entrusted substantially to a single lecturer, Israel Lyons'.[324] Oxford on the other hand provided a lively environment for Hebraic studies, so much so that: 'their energies were dissipated in the controversy about vocalization-points – which raged in the eighteenth century'.[325] So it should not come as a surprise that George Horne and Walter Hodges, two Oxford Hutchinsonians, published their early pamphlets on Hebrew as a part of this controversy.

The Oxford academic environment was a suitable one in which other Hutchinsonian interests could gain ground. In addition to the already existing interest in Hebraic studies, there was a commitment to read and teach

[323] D. Patterson, 'Hebrew Studies,' in L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford, vol. 5, Eighteenth century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986): p. 549.
[324] Christopher Wordsworth, *Scholae Academicae: Some Account of Studies at the English Universities in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1877): pp. 162–70, 215n, pp. 266–8.
[325] Patterson, 'Hebraic Studies': p. 549.

varieties of eighteenth-century thought: ultra-Lockeanism, which can be seen as a Hutchinsonian feature, was a welcome subject of discussion in the curriculum of the university. The Irish bishop Peter Browne's *The Procedure, Extent and Limits of the Human Understanding* (1728), a study with Lockean underpinnings as far as intellectual enquiry was concerned, contained a significant emphasis on the authority of revelation over human reason, and was suggested reading alongside Locke's work on theory of knowledge, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690).[326] Browne, a contemporary of Hutchinson, was an ultra-Lockean in his theory of knowledge and, like Hutchinson, he advocated dependence on revelation for more certain knowledge and especially 'knowledge of divine things'. The fideist readings of Browne were probably introduced to the Oxford students Horne and Jones before their encounter with Hutchinson's writings.[327]

Oxford was exposed to Hutchinsonianism beyond those early followers who happened to have had connections with Oxford and before the circulation of Hutchinson's complete *Works* in 1748, something which has not always been appreciated. Evidence supports the existence of a wider following there as early as the 1730s.

The earliest Oxford scholar interested and familiar with Hutchinsonianism seems to have been Benjamin Holloway, who had known Hutchinson on a personal basis. In the early 1730s, Hutchinson used to visit Oxford and stayed at Holloway's home at Middleton-Stoney. After one of

[326] J. Yolton, 'Schoolmen, Logic and Philosophy,' in L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (eds.) *History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 5, *The eighteenth century* (Oxford University Press, 1986): pp. 581–2.
[327] Peter Browne, *Letter in Answer to a Book entitled Christianity not Mysterious* (London, 1697); *The Procedure* (London, 1728). For Browne's influence on later Hutchinsonians see C.D.A. Leighton, 'Knowledge of Divine Things': pp. 150-175.

those visits in 1734 Hutchinson informed Catcott Senior in a letter of an emerging Hutchinsonian group at Oxford. He also noticed that Holloway's Hutchinsonian tracts were being circulated in the university in that year.[328]

Also at Oxford was Walter Hodges. His most notable work was a commentary on the Book of Job in 1750.[329] However, Hodges was important long before this. William Gardner, the husband of the niece of Hutchinson and himself a follower, provides in one of his letters to Catcott Senior valuable information for answering the question of how the Hutchinsonian movement was introduced to wider academic circles at Oxford. In the letter from Gardner to Catcott Senior dated 26 January 1737, the interest of Hodges in Hutchinson's works is mentioned.[330] It is apparent in the Gardner–Catcott Senior correspondence that Hodges's interest in Hutchinsonianism was initiated a decade before the publication of Hutchinson's *Works* in 1748.

William Jones was introduced to an already existing Hutchinsonian group at Oxford, as his biographer William Stevens shows. In the year 1744, Jones met a group of the followers of Hutchinson.[331] Jones was 18 years old at the time and it was his first year at University College, Oxford. Hutchinson's *Works* (1748) seems therefore not to have been that decisive in creating a Hutchinsonian following at Oxford. It is true, however, that the circulation of the *Works* sealed the recognition of the movement.

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[328] Hutchinson to Catcott Senior, September 1734. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 9

[329] Walter Hodges, *Elihu or an Inquiry into the principal scope and design of the Book of Job* (London, 1750).

[330] William Gardner to Catcott Senior, 26 January 1737. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 20.

[331] William Stevens (ed.), *The Theological, Philosophical and Miscellaneous Works of the Rev. W[illiam] J[ones] in Twelve Volumes* (London, 1801): p. iii.

As we can see from the above, by 1744 the Hutchinsonian movement was already well established at Oxford. Beginning in that year, an Oxford journal called *Student* published various pieces relating to Hutchinsonian concerns. An extract from a piece by Forbes was published on 10 March 1750, coinciding with the publication of his last Hutchinsonian pamphlet, called *Reflexions on the Sources of Incredulity*.[332] The same journal published articles on the Hutchinsonian method of reading Hebrew without points between 1750 and 1752, a period when the poet Christopher Smart, whose Hutchinsonianism has been suggested by Karina Williamson,[333] co-edited the *Student*.[334] The first of these articles appeared on 10 October 1750.[335] The second essay, on the Hutchinsonian method of interpreting Hebrew roots, was written by Hodges. Although some articles come across as parodies of Hutchinsonian methods, the *Student* testified to the recognition of the movement in academic circles. In 1751, William Stevens, whose Hutchinsonian activities fit into a later eighteenth-century context, talked in a letter to Catcott Senior about a circle of Hutchinsonians at Oxford University: 'The people at Oxford are deeply engaged in … [a] grand undertaking.'[336] The Hutchinsonian presence at Oxford did not escape Horace Walpole's attention either. Testifying to its fashionability, in 1753, Walpole argued that the Hutchinsonian system was 'a delightful fantastic

[332] *Student, or the Oxford Monthly Miscellany*, 2 (3) (1744): pp. 85–8.
[333] K. Williamson, 'Smart's Principia: Science and Anti-Science in Jubilate Agno,' *Review of English Studies* 30 (1979): pp. 409–22.
[334] For Smart's interest in Hebrew and Hutchinsonianism in particular, see M. Walsh, 'The Uses of Literary Evidence: Christopher Smart's Knowledge of Hebrew,' *English Studies* 71 (1990): pp. 353–60; 'Smart's Pillars and Hutchinsonians,' *Notes and Queries*, n.s., 33 (1986): pp. 67–70.
[335] *Student* 2 (3) (1744): pp. 306–9.
[336] William Stevens to Catcott Junior, 3 August 1751. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*, f. 37.

one,' and commented that 'it has superseded Methodism, quite decayed in Oxford, its cradle'.[337]

Jones also mentioned some Hutchinsonians well known in Oxford circles, together with their best-known publications, as being friends of Horne, including Hutchinsonians like Holloway, William Dodd and John Parkhurst. The Oxford group published more than a hundred Hutchinsonian pamphlets during the period 1751–84. In the next section the case will be made for the popularity of Hebraic studies in the first two decades of the period mentioned above. I will point out the centrality of the Hebrew undertaking in the Oxford group up to the 1760s. **A**ttention will also be drawn, however, to the decline of Hebraic studies as a Hutchinsonian tool after the 1760s among the Oxford group.

5.1. The Hebrew Connection

Alexander Catcott, Catcott Junior, son of Alexander Stopford Catcott, was given one Hebrew scholarship of the two that were available at Wadham College, which is where he met Jones. [338] This acquaintance was to develop into a friendship that left an extensive correspondence. Jones introduced Catcott Junior as a Hebraist in his learning and an Israelite in his life and manners, in his account of the life of Horne.[339]

Hodges, Horne and Holloway also published on Hebrew. Hodges and Holloway published three pamphlets, and Horne published two contributing to the Hutchinsonian controversy on the etymology of the Hebrew word

[337] W. S. Lewis and John Riely (eds), *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), xxxv, p. 156.
[338] William Jones, *Memoirs of…George Horne*: p. 23.
[339] *Ibid.*

Elahim.[340] Hodges put forward all the possible ways of correctly interpreting the word *Elahim*, giving examples from Hutchinson and Holloway in his work *The Christian Plan*.

George Watson was also a crucial figure in the spreading of Hutchinsonian interests at Oxford. He was the person responsible for introducing Hutchinsonianism to both Jones and Horne as early as 1744, and was a Hebrew scholar at Oxford, where he was the teacher of both men. How he himself was exposed to the ideas of Hutchinson is not clear. It seems certain that Horne and Jones read Hutchinson under Watson's influence. This was expressed later by Jones in his account of Horne's life: 'This gentleman, [Watson] with all his other qualifications was a Hebrew scholar, and a favourer of Mr. Hutchinson's philosophy, but had kept to himself'.[341] Jones admitted that with the help of his Hebrew teacher, his interest in the language flourished so much that 'I had nearly worked myself to death, by determining, like Duns Scotus in the Picture Gallery, to go through a whole chapter in the Hebrew one night.'[342] It was Jones who introduced Horne to Watson, which turned out to be a very fruitful encounter, since Horne **'**instead of going home to his friends in the vacation, stayed for the advantage of following his studies at Oxford, under the direction of his new teacher'.[343] Horne's *Four Letters,* which were published in 1755, clearly indicate that his Hutchinsonian interest was initially in Hebrew. Horne wrote another pamphlet attacking Kennicott's plan of compiling a text of the Old

[340] Walter Hodges, *Elihu* (London, 1750), *The Christian Plan* (London, 1752), *Strictures* (London, 1756); George Horne, *Four Letters* (London, 1755), *A View of Mr. Kennicott's method* (London, 1760); Benjamin Holloway, *Remarks* (London, 1751), *A Vindication* (London, 1753), *Sacred Hebrew* (London, 1754).
[341] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 27.
[342] *Ibid.*
[343] *Ibid.*

Testament in Hebrew in 1760. This pamphlet established the interest of the Oxford audiences, Hutchinsonian and non-Hutchinsonian alike, in the controversy over Hebrew etymologies.

After the much-publicized Hutchinsonian controversy over Elahim, which was concluded in the late 1760s, Hebrew ceased to be a functioning tool for Hutchinsonians. D. Katz makes the same observation, though he associates this with the general decline of learning in the universities in the later eighteenth century. Katz presents Hutchinsonians as an isolated group of Hebraists at Oxford and quoted Spearman's bitterness about this decline: 'The Hebrew tongue, left to the ignorant and vile comments of those who knew nothing of its excellency, is grown contemptible even to a proverb.'[344] The Hutchinsonian controversy, however, was still alive in 1755, the year in which Spearman made this comment on the state of Hebrew, and it continued for another ten years. After the 1760s, however we see Hebraic studies falling out of favour as a Hutchinsonian interest. The Oxford Hutchinsonians lost their interest in the prospects of Hutchinson's Hebrew undertaking after their failure in the controversy over *Elahim*.

Although the shift from Hebrew should not undermine the fact that Hebraic studies were an element of the Hutchinsonian undertaking for a long period during the eighteenth century, it hints at a weakening in the coherence of the movement, the reasons for which will be explained further.

5.2. Varieties of Anti-Newtonianism

[344] *Abstract from the Works of John Hutchinson*, 2nd edition (Edinburgh, 1755): p. 206.

The Oxford group, throughout this period, yearned for their studies to be relevant to contemporary intellectual moods. Horne especially, as will be argued in a later section, made a special effort to move Hutchinsonian ideals from the margins to the centre of orthodox thought and tried to make more acceptable the unpopular tenets of Hutchinsonian enquiry without damaging the core. Just as the intellectual warfare over Hebrew was increasingly abandoned from the 1770s onwards, the Anti-Newtonian aspect of the movement was also modified.

The Oxford group certainly carried the anti-Newtonian aspects of the movement into the late eighteenth century. Jones, as late as 1795, argued that any other position than anti-Newtonianism was impossible:

> When a student had once persuaded himself that he sees truth in the principles of Mr. Hutchinson, a great revolution succeeds in his ideas of the natural world and economy. Qualities in matter, with a vacuum for them to act in, are no longer venerable and the authority of Newton's name, which goes with them, loses some of its influence.[345]

But note the tone here: Newton's name is accorded authority and an acceptance of the principles of Hutchinson leads only to the loss of some of Newton's influence. I shall investigate the different forms of anti-Newtonianism pursued by the Oxford group, using Horne, Jones, and Catcott Junior as representative examples, each of whom displayed slightly different versions of Hutchinsonian anti-Newtonianism.

5.3. George Horne (1730-1792)

With figures such as Horne, Jones and Catcott Junior we see a continuation of the Hutchinsonian interest in arguments against Newtonian natural

[345] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 36.

philosophy. This interest in its very early stages was vehemently, even violently, anti-Newtonian. The young Horne was very much influenced by Hutchinson's opposition to Newtonian physics and the view that it was inadequate and incompatible with the Genesis account in the Old Testament. Horne's early publications echoed faithfully Hutchinson's anti-Newtonianism.[346] Reflecting upon the bad reputation of Hutchinson's thoughts on cosmology, Horne believed he could explain it:

> One great reason why Mr. Hutchinson's discoveries have not been received, at least examined to see whether they deserve or not, I am fully persuaded, upon a thorough consideration on the matter, is this – It has been an opinion for some time entertained, that Sir Isaac's philosophy is absolutely certain and infallible.[347]

It was enough, cried out Horne, that 'The Newtonian system has now been in possession of the chair for some years.' He argued that, in the meantime, Hutchinson had come up with a more sensible philosophy.

Horne's main anti-Newtonian argument was that in a cosmology like that of Newton, the causes of natural phenomena were left without any explanation. One reason for this was that Newton's mathematical system was not, according to Horne, compatible with the physical world. It was all about effects, and that left holes in the system. Of course all the criticisms of Newtonian cosmology ended up with one ultimate accusation: the fact that his thought led to infidelity, neglected revelation and ignored the Trinity. Horne in his tracts on natural philosophy 'argued trenchantly against the Newtonian concept of a vacuum, implicit in his theory of gravitation, as conducive to

[346] George Horne, *The Theology and Philosophy in Cicero's Somnium … Explained, or, an attempt to demonstrate that the Newtonian system is perfectly agreeable to the notions of the wisest ancients* (Oxford, 1751); *A Fair, Candid and Impartial state of the Case between Newton and Mr. Hutchinson. In which is shown, how far a system of physics is capable of mathematical demonstration; how far Sir Isaac's … has that demonstration, etc.* (Oxford, 1753).
[347] Horne, *Fair, Candid Case*: p. 6.

atheism'.[348] On another occasion too one can easily see the resemblance with Hutchinson's uncompromising and offensive style. Horne, referring to the Newtonian concept of the vacuum, made it clear that he was on Hutchinson's side:

> 'Who is that vain, presumptuous wretch, that shall dare to say or think they are in a vacuum, even supposing such a thing ever was, or is possible to be?'[349]

William Warburton noticed this daring and strongly worded pamphlet of Horne and recommended it to Bishop Hurd in his correspondence in 1751. In the letter, Warburton expressed his astonishment at Horne's unashamed anti-Newtonianism and presented this tract as the definitive study of Hutchinsonianism. Warburton's witty approach to Horne's anti-Newtonianism is also worth noting:

> Mr. [Alexander] Pope used to tell me, that when he had any thing better than ordinary to say, and yet too bold, he always reserved it for a second or third edition. And then nobody took any notice of it. But there is one book, and that no large one, which I would recommend to your perusal, it is called 'The theology and philosophy of Cicero's Somn. Scip. Examined'. It is indeed [the] *ne plus ultra* of Hutchinsonianism. In this twelve-penny pamphlet Newton is proved an Atheist and a Blockhead. And what would you more?[350]

It is obvious that Horne inherited the early Hutchinsonian antipathy for and concern at deist and Arian tendencies that tended to strip the books of Scripture of their authority on the truths of nature. The reasons for surviving anti-Newtonianism in England were not restricted to this, and Horne was by no means alone in arguing against acceptance of Newton.[351] However,

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[348] Patterson, 'Hebrew Studies': p. 457.
[349] George Horne, *Theology and Philosophy*: p. 9.
[350] Warburton, *Letters*: p. 84.
[351] For a discussion of the critique of Newton by Daniel Waterland, Richard Grey, William Warburton and George Berkeley see Scott Mandelbrote 'Newton and eighteenth-century

Horne's anti-Newtonianism essentially represents part of the Hutchinsonian agenda that was aimed at restoring the Trinity to the centre of Christian dogma. In his later years, Horne, while certainly not abandoning Hutchinsonian aims, was to drop his anti-Newtonian stance for reasons that will be discussed later on.

5.4. Alexander Catcott (1725-1779)

Alexander Catcott, Catcott Junior, the Hutchinsonian divine and geologist, was the son of the Alexander Stopford Catcott who had initiated the Hutchinsonian controversy on *Elahim*. Catcott Junior graduated as a B.A. from Wadham College, Oxford in 1748. His Hutchinsonian interests included a focus on natural history and cosmology. His most famous publication was *A Treatise on the Deluge*.[352]

Catcott Junior pursued his interest in natural history alongside his general Hutchinsonian interests. This becomes evident when one draws a profile of the persons with whom Catcott Junior kept in contact. Catcott Junior, like his father, engaged in correspondence with many other Hutchinsonians. These included William Romaine, William Stevens, George Randolph, George Horne, William Jones and Robert Spearman. In his *Oxford Journal*, Catcott Junior mentioned visits to people such as William Gardner, and having dinners with William Romaine and George Horne.[353] Like these persons mentioned, Catcott Junior shared an appetite for natural philosophy, especially with Jones. Their long correspondence has survived

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Christianity' in I.B. Cohen and G.E. Smith (eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Newton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): pp. 409-431.

[352] Alexander Catcott, *Treatise on the Deluge* (London, 1761).

[353] Alexander Catcott, *Oxford Journal*, Vol.1 (1748): p. 16.

and is preserved in the Bristol Reference Library Collection.[354] Later, Jones acknowledged that he had visited the library in 1790 when Catcott Junior's collection of fossils had been deposited there after his death.[355]

J. Barry, in his unpublished dissertation on the cultural life of Bristol, pointed to the local Hutchinsonian presence and the Hutchinsonianism of the Catcotts. Both Catcotts tried to keep their Hutchinsonianism rather private, though anti-Newtonianism was certainly a part of it:

> The Catcotts, father and son, were both part of the Hutchinsonian scientific circle, based on Oxford ties, and maintained largely by letters and occasional visits. Bristol contained a number of other Hutchinsonians close to the Catcotts but they never took up Hutchinson's suggestion of starting a local society, partly because they felt on the defensive against local critics of their esoteric natural philosophy.[356]

A letter referred to by Barry, written by Hutchinson to Catcott Senior concerning the matter of organising in Bristol, coincides with the time when the Oxford Hutchinsonian group was emerging:

> I sent you a challenge to meet me at Oxford and was there … for about three weeks. I hope with success they propose to set up a meeting there and hope you will do so at Bristol.[357]

Although Catcott Senior did not rise to the challenge, he and his son kept close contact with the already existing followers in the area. One of these persons was Dr George Randolph, a physician from Bath. Catcott Junior also exchanged letters with people known for their interest in geology, Emmanuel Mendes Da Costa being the most famous of them.[358] Catcott

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[354] *Catcott Correspondence.*
[355] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 23.
[356] J. Barry, 'The Cultural Life of Bristol, 1640–1775,' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, St. John's College, Oxford, September 1985): p. 253.
[357] John Hutchinson to Catcott Senior, 4 September 1734. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 9.
[358] Emanuel Mendes da Costa to Catcott Junior, 16 July 65. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 60.

Junior also 'went on geological trips with other Bristolians'.[359] He also kept journals, which constitute valuable accounts of his travels in England and Wales, collecting fossils and studying the strata. Catcott Junior's journals include scientific observations and different theories compared and contrasted concerning the Deluge, in the light of evidence obtained from the land.[360] Catcott Junior occasionally expressed his dislike of aspects of Newtonianism, and its supposed tendencies, but these expressions concern the Deluge and the reformation of the earth. The whole point of Diluvialism, to which Catcott Junior himself was attached, was to argue that there was scientific evidence for the Flood. The comments of some Newtonians like Whiston, explaining the Flood as resulting from the termination of the gravitational force, were not acceptable to Catcott Junior.[361]

Catcott Junior's interest in cosmology was primarily that of a scientific enquirer and, above all, as a geologist. His premises, however, were undeniably Hutchinsonian. He was not interested, for example, in explaining the Deluge by concepts such as the termination of the gravitational force and the subsequent rise of the waters, or the attraction caused by a comet. Catcott Junior dismissed these peculiarly Newtonian concepts and believed in the sufficiency of the Genesis account as Hutchinsonians interpreted it: that the flood was universal,[362] and that the aim of geological land studies should be towards supporting this argument. Accordingly, Catcott Junior's *Treatise on the Deluge* followed the Hutchinsonian determination to prove the value of the Genesis account,

[359] *Barry*, 'Cultural Life of Bristol': p. 253.
[360] *Catcott's Tours in England and Wales.* Bristol Reference Library, Ref. No: B 14490
[361] Alexander Catcott, *Oxford Journal*, Bristol Reference Library, Ref: B 14490, p. 24.
[362] Genesis 7: pp. 19-20.

properly interpreted, as a guide to natural phenomena. In this pamphlet, he integrated a great deal of his land study to support his interpretation of the Flood account. Catcott Junior also compared the theories of the Flood put forward by other people such as John Woodward and Arthur Scheuzer.

Catcott Junior's *Treatise* was welcomed by the Hutchinsonian circle. Horne, in a letter to Catcott Junior, stated that he enjoyed reading the treatise and added a couple of comments as well. In this letter Horne made comments on the specific usage of Hebrew words relating to the account of the Flood in the book of Genesis, referring back to both Hutchinson and Bate.[363] One can see here how the theories of someone, primarily interested in geology, could become linked also to the issue of the correct interpretation of the unpointed Hebrew scripture. One must also appreciate of course that Catcott Junior was the son of a father, who had been far more directly concerned with the Hebrew question.

In brief, Catcott Junior was a Hutchinsonian with an interest in natural philosophy and, particularly, geology, an interest to which the anti-Newtonianism of a theologically and scripturally inspired cosmology, and a theory of correctly interpreting the unpointed Hebrew of the Old Testament, could provide both argument and assumption, while making it no less a matter of scientific enquiry. His scientific endeavours, his collecting fossils and his land surveys were aimed at providing evidence not only for the existence of the biblical Flood, but also to serve his ultimate Hutchinsonian purpose: to establish the authority of the correctly read Book of Genesis. In this way, the Hutchinsonian belief in theological representationalism

[363] George Horne to Catcott Junior, 23 June 1761. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 54.

exhibited itself in Catcott Junior's geological interest. Catcott Junior was a member of the Oxford group who had become less interested in describing the whole Hutchinsonian system, but that still governed his whole approach to his speciality.

5.5. William Jones (1726-1800)

The correspondence of Catcott Junior and Jones coincided with the period of Jones's preparation of his tract on natural philosophy. The surviving correspondence in the Bristol Reference Library indicates that they started exchanging letters in 1759. This was while Jones was in Wadenho in Northamptonshire, working as curate to his brother-in-law, the Rev. Brook Bridges. In 1762, *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy* appeared. Jones's biographer, William Stevens, summarized the aim of the work as:

> To demonstrate the use of natural means or second causes in the economy of the material world, from reason, experiments, and the testimony of Antiquity.[364]

The correspondence shows that there was an exchange of ideas between Jones and Catcott Junior during the preparation of this work. Jones published three more pamphlets on natural history, the last being *Considerations on the Natural History of the Earth and its Minerals* in 1787.[365] His interest in nature in relation to Scripture is expressed by his biographer Stevens:

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[364] William Stevens (ed.) *Works of William Jones*: p. xxvi. See Appendix for other publications of William Jones on natural philosophy.

[365] William Jones, *Considerations on the Nature and Economy of Beasts and Cattle* (London, 1785), *The Religious Use of Botanical Philosophy* (London, 1786) and *Considerations in Natural History of the Earth and its Minerals* (London, 1787).

> The powers of nature truly understood, in the sense of this author, agree with what is revealed to us concerning the nature of God and man, which is a farther recommendation of the plan … But nature, falsely understood, as in modern philosophy, leads to such ideas of God as are contrary to the Christian religion.[366]

Jones's argument was that Hutchinsonianism did not aim to mystify the relationship between God and Nature but, on the contrary, by the use of experimental philosophy, it aimed to show that Creator and creature could and should be distinguished. Thinking otherwise, Jones argued, would lead men to invent ideas that would lead to materialism. This objection to Newtonianism has been widely remarked on and held to be fundamental to Hutchinsonianism, and is hardly peculiar to Jones. The Hutchinsonian argument that operations in nature were carried on by the agency of the elements fire, light, and air, argued Jones, could be deduced from a study of experimental philosophy. The theory of matter was an important issue here. One way of distinguishing creator and the creature was to argue for inert matter, which Newtonians totally challenged. What could not be deduced from experimental philosophy was what Jones and his fellow Hutchinsonians accused Newtonians of: to assume that the clockwork structure of the universe invented itself. 'Nature is Christian,' asserted Jones: nature pointed to a purpose, and symbolized the very truth about the Trinity, and all this could be proved with the tools of the experimental study of nature. This thought, although implicit in Hutchinson himself, was argued by him largely from the other direction — that is, from scripture. However both Jones's and Hutchinson's way of thinking would agree that natural philosophy should not

[366] Stevens, *Works of Jones*: p. xxvii.

disagree with revelation. So Jones published a series of books to illustrate his thinking.[367]

Jones's motive in engaging with natural philosophy as a part of his Hutchinsonian understanding came from his wish to argue that the results of scientific enquiry should not dispute, but could confirm, the revealed truth about God and His creation. It was most probably the Newtonians, not the method of experimental science itself, who ended up mixing the causes of natural phenomena with the effects, argued Jones. He also argued against Newton and his followers for their confusing of God and his creation:

> It seems, by some persons, that the elementary philosophy naturally leads to Atheism, and Sir Isaac Newton himself is charged with giving countenance to materialism by his ether though nothing can be further from the truth; and it is surprising how such a thought could ever enter into the head of any man. It is the aim and study of the elementary, called the Hutchinsonian philosophy, not to confound God and nature, but to distinguish between the creator and the creature.[368]

Jones here did not seem to agree with Hutchinson that Newtonianism in its entirety, or at least Newton himself, necessarily led to materialism. Yet Jones's ideas were perhaps the most developed statements, pointing out the potential dangers of Newtonianism. Jones provided the reasons behind his anti-Newtonianism, which stemmed from the potential danger of setting up or inventing a natural philosophy that could undermine God's transcendence. Jones argued that one could not legitimately try to come up with a

[367] William Jones, *Physiological Disquisitions, or Discourses on the Natural Philosophy of the Elements* (London, 1781), *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy* (Oxford, 1762), *Zoologia Ethica: A Disquisition concerning the Mosaic Distinction of Animals into clean and unclean* (London, 1771), *The Book of Nature* (London, 1792).
[368] Stevens, *Works of Jones*: p. xxvi.

philosophy to explain God's design: 'A system may be fabricated and called natural, but a religion cannot be.'[369] That must be based on revelation.

5.6. Towards Moderation

There was a gradual change in the nature of the movement and something of a decrease in the influence of Hutchinson on the later following. Let us investigate the ways in which the shift of interest from Hebrew towards a more general theological attitude as a part of the Hutchinsonian undertaking occurred. Hebrew was no longer a prime concern. The Hutchinsonian controversy over *Elahim* had given Hebraic studies a special place amongst the branches of Hutchinsonian teaching. However the debate was essentially over after the 1760s. Although an unpointed text of the Old Testament had triumphed, the Hutchinsonians had failed in their effort to convert the mainstream to their method with that text. After the decades-long row aimed at using the unpointed Hebrew to establish the fundamental points of Christianity, especially the Trinity, individuals such as Horne longed for a more peaceful environment in which to further the Hutchinsonian undertaking concerning the heart of the matter:

> Enough has been given to the arts of controversy – let something be given to the studies of piety and a holy life. If we can once unite in these our tempers may be better disposed to unite in doctrine.[370]

George Horne was the first Hutchinsonian to state the necessity of abandoning the militancy of Hutchinson and the early followers. His own Hutchinsonianism illustrates the transition, which was not a change in the

[369] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*, preface.
[370] *Aphorisms and Opinions of Dr. George Horne, with Notes and a Biographical Sketch* (London, 1857), pp. 34–5.

ultimate aim, but in how to pursue the 'Grand Undertaking'. In his early years Horne had not hesitated to show the Hutchinsonian traits that had offended Newtonians in matters of natural philosophy — even Newtonians who were perfectly orthodox in theological matters — had offended Hebraists with no Arian, Socininian or deist tendencies, and had upset perfectly orthodox, traditional exegetes in matters of interpreting the Old Testament exegesis. Nevertheless in his later years, Horne expressed a reluctance to maintain this militant approach. Referring to the long Hutchinsonian controversy on *Elahim* in his later years, which he himself had joined with various pamphlets, he demanded a better medium than Hebraic studies for furthering Hutchinsonian aims. His intention in doing so was related to his willingness to dispose of the conflict-ridden features of the Hutchinsonian undertaking.[371]

Hutchinson himself was cited as an influence less and less by the later following. This does not, however, mean that Hutchinson's influence became insignificant or irrelevant for the later Oxford Hutchinsonians. On the contrary, for the later group of followers, Hutchinson's system of thought lost little of its importance. However, the Oxford group had highly respected public reputations, which they did not wish to lay open to damage. Their effort to strip references to Hutchinson from their writings can be seen as an effort to ameliorate the profile of the movement and to ease its relations with others of an orthodox frame of mind. It becomes almost impossible to rule out the slightly underhand nature of this when one traces the private correspondence among Hutchinsonians themselves. One could see this as a

[371] Gurses, 'Hutchinsonian defence': p. 17.

change in their outward self-representation. Partly too, this showed itself in a willingness to call on non-Hutchinsonians such as Charles Leslie to strengthen their arguments. It did not imply a rejection of Hutchinson, but an effort to make less open the use of Hutchinson himself by using other parts of the orthodox canon.

When Hutchinsonianism gained ground in places such as Oxford, Horne observed the difficulty of being simultaneously a Hutchinsonian and a respected divine. Horne realized the hostility towards himself and his fellow Hutchinsonians in his early career:

> These [are] poor gentlemen, the Hutchinsonians, because they'll never get any preferment. The bishops … all entered into a league never to promote them … [yet] we are not of the numbers of them who preach Christ for gain or take orders because we are likely to get more by that than anything else.[372]

On another occasion, Horne worried about religious dissent and how unnecessary it was to display partisanship, among the orthodox, in matters of religion. In a letter to Catcott Junior, Horne asks if he had read William Dodd's treatise, *A Conference.*[373] In the letter Horne made sarcastic comments on Dodd's efforts to clear himself from all labels so as to make promotion more likely, but this was to be a strategy that he himself was to pursue in his later years, not for promotion perhaps, but in the cause of moderation and unity:

> Have you seen the Conference between the five worthies of different persuasions, a mystic, a Hutchinsonian, A Calvinist, a Methodist, and a Churchman? It is said to be Master Dodd's, who has been employed for some time in scrubbing and scouring

[372] Cambridge University Library, MS 8134/B/2, 'Commonplace Book,' parts of it quoted in N. Aston, 'Horne and Heterodoxy: The Defence of Anglican beliefs in the Late Enlightenment,' *English Historical Review* 104 (1993): pp. 895–919; p. 899.
[373] William Dodd, *A Conference between a Mystic, and Hutchinsonian, a Calvinist, a Methodist, a Member of the Church of England and others wherein the Tenets of each are freely examined and discussed* (London, 1761).

> himself clean of all the isms, for preferment. The parties in this conference are poor fools indeed, and pin one another down like so many ninepins … The pamphlet shows one very melancholy truth, which is, that we are crumbling every day more and more into sects and divisions, and by and by it will be a difficult matter to get half a dozen people together who shall agree in matters spiritual.[374]

It is obvious here that the issues that Horne was referring to here, were a part of a larger debate, larger than the Hutchinsonian scheme of things. The breaking down of Anglicanism into various factions, the Methodist challenges, and the problem of Calvinism were all causing concern in orthodox circles.[375] Here Horne's comments are more than a personal slant. However, it shows that Horne was perhaps beginning to appreciate that his own undertaking, his own Hutchinsonianism, could be contributing to the totality of the assault on the unity and strength of the Anglican church.

This desire to moderate or soften the profile of Hutchinsonians and to avoid divisions in the Church can be seen in Jones 's account of the life of Horne. *The Life of Dr. Horne* was very much an apologetic work, virtually an effort to clear away all the charges of Hutchinsonianism against Horne. On one occasion, Jones almost denied that Horne was interested in Hutchinson's Hebrew method, despite the fact that Horne actually produced pamphlets defending the Hutchinsonian Hebrew method and that Horne's interest in Hutchinsonianism had been initiated through Hutchinson's Hebrew method:

> I do not recollect, that his writings anywhere discover a professed attachment to the Hebrew criticisms of Mr. Hutchinson; and I could prove abundantly from his private

[374] George Horne to Catcott Junior, 23 June 1761. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 54.
[375] On Wesley and Anglicanism, see F. Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England* (London: Epworth Press, 1970). On Wesley, see H. D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992).

> letters to myself that he was no friend to the use of such evidence either in philosophy or divinity.[376]

On the other hand, we see Jones, in a late work, acknowledging Hutchinson's undeniable influence on the career of Horne:

> I know it to be true, that he owed to him, the beginning of his extensive knowledge; for such a beginning as he made placed him on a new spot of high ground; from which he took all his prospects of religion and learning.[377]

The beginnings of Horne's extensive knowledge were with Hebraic studies under the direction of his Hutchinsonian teacher George Watson. The early Horne, as mentioned in the previous chapter joined in the controversy over *Elahim* to defend the Hutchinsonian Hebraic method. Horne also acknowledged a general inspiration by Hutchinson. So, these two quotations from Jones, do point to something that became a trend followed by fellow Hutchinsonians. In his later years Horne was to engage in a public enterprise to drop the label 'Hutchinsonian,' for both himself and for Jones, even though in his private correspondence it appears that Hutchinson never ceased to be an influence.[378]

The true nature of the movement itself was not subject to a radical change, but one can see the concealment of attachment to Hutchinson. The use of other non-Hutchinsonian material was, at least to some extent, a part of this concealment, rather than a real change of heart. There was a point however, in the last decades of the eighteenth century, where one can observe a real disintegration of the movement and the Hutchinsonians'

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[376] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 175.
[377] William Jones, *A New Preface to the Second Edition of Memoirs of the Life, Studies, Writings, &c. Of the Right Rev. George Horne* (London, 1799): p. ii.
[378] George Horne to Catcott Junior, 19 October 1761. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 55.

eclectic search for the defences of orthodoxy did undergo a change. This will be examined in the next chapter.

A remark made by Horne represents his intentions as to how the teachings of Hutchinson should be restructured. Horne's call for a change of course in promoting Hutchinson is evident here. Right after the defeat in the controversy over Elahim, Horne commented:

> I had much rather the name of Hutchinson were dropped, and the useful things in him recommended to the world, with their evidence, in another manner than they have been.[379]

Although it was possible for Horne's generation to relate themselves to a general orthodoxy, it was inevitably a hard thing to do so through the aggressive Hutchinson himself.

A change of method for Horne was to use Hutchinson without mentioning him. Horne gave one reason for such a necessity in his private correspondence with Catcott Junior. In a letter written in 1761, Horne complained that in the age they lived in there were amazingly few people who 'will take the trouble to read any book which requires thought and attention'. Talking about Hutchinson as a member of a fraternity, Horne proceeded: 'A writer on philosophy and divinity, brother John, in such times, comes across with great disadvantages.'[380] It seems likely that Horne and his fellow Hutchinsonians did not want to face the 'great disadvantages' that would not only hinder their own public profile, but also the credibility of their undertaking.

Horne's intentions to integrate the learning and influences he had from non-Hutchinsonians, as writers in one melting pot, is evident by his

[379] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: pp. 55–6.
[380] George Horne to Catcott Junior, 19 October 1761. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063: f. 55.

extensive usage of material from Charles Leslie (1650-1722). Jones commented on this in his biography of Horne. It was after the publication of *An Essay on Spirit* by Dr. Clayton, the bishop of Clogher in Ireland in the year 1750, that Jones and Horne met the works of Leslie. While preparing an *Answer to the Essay* in 1753, they consulted the works of Leslie and appreciated him. However, these were early days for Horne and Jones in terms of the moderating of their Hutchinsonianism. Later on, in the late 1760s, the demise of the Hutchinsonian Hebrew method led them to realize that Hutchinson's influence should be concealed if their message was to be put across. One could say therefore, that first came the use of additional resources, beyond Hutchinson, while later came the dropping, in public, of the name of Hutchinson.

Jones much later in 1799 felt the need to explain their appreciation of the writings of Leslie or others alongside those of Hutchinson:

> When the writings of Leslie, or Law, or Hutchinson, were before Mr. Horne, he used them with judgement and moderation, to qualify and temper each other: he took what was excellent from all, without admitting what was exceptionable from any.[381]

Again one senses some economy with the truth here. The early Horne does not seem to have regarded Hutchinson as just another fruitful resource. The use of other writers by Horne and Jones in the mid-century did not necessarily demonstrate any departure from Hutchinson as such, but it would increasingly become an invitation to other intellectuals to join their speculation and to incorporate a sanitized Hutchinsonian thinking with the rest of contemporary orthodox thought. Thus, the movement was undergoing a both gradual and subtle change in its nature.

[381] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 74.

Horne and Jones benefited from other people's writings in preparing their *Answer* in 1753, but the overriding aim of the defence of the Trinity remained intact, and was in fact the driving force in preparing the *Answer*. William Jones's collected works, which were edited by William Stevens, provide certain clues as to the ways in which he adopted Horne's suggestion of dropping Hutchinson's name. Jones preferred to talk about Hutchinson's influences and targets. In a tract called *A Short Way to Truth, or The Christian Doctrine of a Trinity in Unity*, Jones gives a long definition of Trinitarian analogy as used by Hutchinson without ever mentioning his name. He refers instead to other thinkers who promoted more or less the same argument, such as Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733-1806) and Charles Leslie, as contemporaries and influences.[382] In matters of cosmology, Jones again referred to other anti-Newtonian thinkers such as Boerhaave, without giving any explicit references to Hutchinson.

Although Jones was reluctant to present both Horne and himself as devoted followers of Hutchinson, his private opinion of Hutchinson did not differ markedly from anyone in the earlier circle of followers, except that he felt the need to discard Hutchinson's vehemence:

> He [Hutchinson] was a man of a warm and hasty spirit, like Martin Luther; who to certain modern speculations in philosophy and theology, could preserve no more respect than Luther did to the errors of Popery.[383]

Ironically, this is in fact the way that Hutchinson wanted to be perceived. He always thought of himself as a reformer of religion like Luther.

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[382] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 325 and p. 335 respectively. On Horsley, see F.C. Mather, *High-Church Prophet. Bishop Samuel Horsley and the Caroline Tradition in the Later Georgian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).
[383] *Ibid.*

What I have argued in this chapter is that early Hutchinsonian traits were transmitted relatively unchanged to, and to a certain extent through, the Oxford group. It would be safe to argue that Hebrew studies, together with Hutchinson's Hebrew method, and the anti-Newtonian agenda of the movement were the attractions for the Oxford group. Later, each follower pursued his own Hutchinsonian interests according to his preferences, but the overall aim remained intact as the defence of the Trinity, the transcendence of God and of the authority of biblical revelation, whether through an engagement with biblical hermeneutics or through a study of natural history. Too much significance can be attached to the shift of interests among the later Hutchinsonians. In Chapter Three, I suggested that the Hutchinsonian system rested on the authority and credibility of each individual component of the Hutchinsonian scheme, which had to be able to withstand criticism when taken alone. Accordingly, here in the Oxford phase, we see Catcott Junior dealing only with natural philosophy and particularly geology as his contribution to the undertaking.

In another way, the anti-Newtonianism of George Horne may have diminished as a part of his Hutchinsonian interests, but this change did not necessarily prove that a significant transformation had occurred in his basic ideas. The freedom of movement allowed by the Hutchinsonian system enabled later followers to pursue one particular Hutchinsonian interest without putting stress on the others. Did this make someone less of a Hutchinsonian? One might be inclined to think so, but this could also be interpreted as the endurance of the movement in adapting to the need for change and to personal specialisms. Yes, Horne may have eventually desired

that Hutchinson's name should be dropped, but this did not stop him praising Hutchinson's grand design. Horne's Hutchinsonianism can hardly be doubted, and by reflecting on his example of trying to keep his private devotion and public persona separate in his later years, it can be suggested that this may well have been the pattern for a considerable number of Hutchinsonians in the second half of the eighteenth century.

As a general conclusion, it can be said that the Oxford group transmitted early Hutchinsonian traits through into the late eighteenth century. What strikes us the most about this later phase of the movement is the search for moderation, an effort to ameliorate the Hutchinsonian public profile. Change was also explained by the fact that some elements of the system were getting marginalized in time. The Hebrew undertaking was a defeat for Hutchinsonians. The ways in which they had pursued this undertaking had only created tension and division. The realization of the problem that the Hutchinsonians themselves represented for those who would otherwise be their Trinitarian allies led figures like Horne and Jones to develop a more moderate and selective approach. Anti-Newtonianism as such could be allowed to become a secondary issue, dropped by some, such as Horne, or made secondary to some more specialized area, such as geology, in the hands of others, such as Catcott Junior. It became an optional personal interest of individual Hutchinsonians rather than a must component of the Hutchinsonian system of thought. Later in the century, Hutchinsonians would state what had come to matter the most for them, as indeed in one sense it always had done:

> The question seems really to have been this; whether Christianity, in the truth and spirit of it, ought to be preserved; or

whether a spiritless thing, called by name of Christianity, would answer the purpose better: in other words, whether the religion of Man's philosophy, or the religion of God's Revelation, should prevail.[384]

[384] Jones, *Memoirs of...George Horne*: p. 94.

CHAPTER 6

FROM MODERATION TO ASSIMILATION

1777–1806

This chapter is aimed at concluding my narrative of the Hutchinsonians. The first objective of the chapter is to set out the new threats that forced Hutchinsonians to revise and renew their methods towards the end of the eighteenth century. I will explain the Hutchinsonian response to heterodoxy in the late eighteenth century and particularly to its links to political and social revolution. Hutchinsonians came to exhibit their fair share of the rising patriotism and increasing political conservatism of the period, responding to the threat of revolution made vivid by the actual revolution in France. They responded also to the ideas that appeared to have fed that revolution and which might seem about to feed revolution at home. The French Revolution itself seemed to inspire further intellectual as well as practical threats and these too needed to be answered.[385]

Individual Hutchinsonians such as George Horne, William Jones, William Stevens and William Van Mildert will be discussed here to present this Hutchinsonian response to the revolutionary threat. What will come out

[385] See N. Murray, 'The Influence of the French Revolution on the Church of England and its Rivals, 1789-1802' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1975), for an examination of a variety of ecclesiastical reactions to the French Revolution, including those of the high-church Hackney phalanx, the orthodox bishops and the liberal latitudinarians. See also, N. Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe, 1750-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) for a summary of the political and intellectual threats posed by the French Revolution and the how Churches in Europe, including the Anglican Church, coped with it.

of this discussion is that Hutchinsonianism — already somewhat moderated and more in harmony with the wider orthodoxy of the period — came to the point of extinction in its very effort to unite with orthodoxy, partly in the process of trying to meet this revolutionary threat. The philosophical backing that was seen to lie behind this threat was related to the philosophical challenge that had given birth to Hutchinsonianism at the beginning of the eighteenth century. However, the emphases and aims of that challenge had changed and were changing: it was no longer a threat so much to the nature of the Church of England as to the place of that Church in the political and religious establishment. The Hutchinsonian response, dropping or playing down one Hutchinsonian tool after another in the cause of highlighting the common interests and aims of orthodoxy, led to Hutchinsonianism's demise and the downfall of their own movement.

Let us begin with the threats to Protestant Christian orthodoxy as they had come to be by the late 1770s. By this time the deist threat seemed almost to have faded away. Samuel Johnson argued that in 1775 there was a 'great cry about infidelity; but there are, in reality, very few infidels,' and reported that there were no more than two hundred infidels in England.[386] Arians, who had been the main targets of the attack at the beginning of the eighteenth century, were not regarded as so much of a threat by the last quarter of the century. If that meant the threat was in one sense more extreme — Socinian, Unitarian, more purely deist or even atheist — it also meant it was more marginalised. Deism, while it had always been accused of leading to atheism,

[386] R.W. Chapman (ed.), *Life of Johnson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970): p. 623

as Clark has argued, now 'emerged as something indistinguishable from infidelity'.[387]

The 1790s were going to put a new complexion on the seriousness of the threat. A good number of heterodox thinkers were encouraged by the example and ideals of the French Revolution. This, for Hutchinsonians, was a definitive moment where, in response to revolutionary ideas, they had to reconsider their position and take the offensive again. According to the British Library catalogue, there were twenty-four pamphlets published against infidelity in the twelve-year period between 1789 and 1800, an average of two pamphlets a year. If one compares this number with the twenty publications in the nineteen-year period between 1770 and 1789, roughly one pamphlet a year on average, it becomes clear that the numbers nearly doubled. George Horne and William Van Mildert's publications on infidelity are included in these numbers.[388]

Even before the French Revolution, provocative publications had suggested new threats from heterodoxy, as they had in the early 1700s, and had triggered a new wave of Hutchinsonian reaction. Of these new heterodox challenges, the most prominent and earliest came with Joseph Priestley's 1777 publication *Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit*. This, as Clark suggests, revived the very questions that Hutchinson had sought to answer earlier in trying to defend orthodoxy.[389] Priestley's anti-trinitarianism, combined with his republican ideas, alarmed Hutchinsonians in general, but,

[387] Quoted in J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): p. 404.
[388] See Appendix for the Hutchinsonian publications during this period.
[389] Clark: p. 401.

first and foremost, Horne.[390] He attacked unitarianism fiercely through his assault on Priestley, accusing him of reducing religion to a belief system without redemption, 'a Nothing'.[391]

The Hutchinsonian response to new heterodox threats from the 1770s onwards was, however, of a different kind to that earlier in the century. Compared to their then singular, and at times seemingly eccentric, efforts, Hutchinsonians were now engaged, as I shall show, in an endeavour to ally with the more general orthodox response. Hutchinson himself was not forgotten. In an effort to re-present Hutchinson to the wider orthodoxy, Jones, according to William Stevens, recommended Hutchinson as a means to 'turn Christians into Scholars and Scholars into Christians.'[392] Yet the 1790s witnessed successive efforts by Hutchinsonians to establish societies aimed at uniting and strengthening orthodoxy, rather than aggressively pushing a distinctive system. The Society for the Reformation of Principles, with its publication *The Scholar Armed,* and the Society called 'Nobody's Friends' were Hutchinsonian efforts to draw orthodoxy's attention to the need to hold on to the principles that held the constitution —both religious and political— together.

One of the differences this time around concerned the issue of the anti-Newtonianism that had often marked out the Hutchinsonians at the beginning of the century. It was no longer a prime issue. Not that anti-Newtonianism was an uncommon stance in the late eighteenth century, but it

[390] George Horne, *Letter to the Reverend Doctor Priestley* (Oxford, 1787).
[391] Horne, *Letter to Priestley*: p. 7.
[392] James Allan Park, *Memoirs of William Stevens* (London, 1823).

no longer needed to be, in itself, divisive.[393] Newtonianism itself was no longer seen anymore as necessarily the highway to deism and atheism, even by Hutchinsonians.

In 1795, Jones stated that for many years it has been argued that 'Heathenism was about to rise again out of some new speculations, and reputedly grand discoveries, in Natural Philosophy'. Jones however also stated that he was not willing to believe that Newton and his followers such as Samuel Clarke 'had actually formed any such design.'[394]

Hutchinsonians were, by the end of the eighteenth century, prepared to differ, in a friendly way, with Newtonian orthodox allies. The heat had gone out of the Newtonian/Anti-Newtonian argument. In religious and philosophical terms, by the end of the century, the Newtonian approach had become a method of study of the material cosmos that no longer necessarily threatened to compromise the nature of the relationship between God and the cosmos. More than anything perhaps, this helped Hutchinsonians to drop the aggression from their anti-Newtonianism. This in turn allowed them to present a more moderate face of the movement and to concentrate on what had become more vital issues in the clash between heterodox and orthodox, and between revolution and establishment. Between 1781 and 1806, there was not a single anti-Newtonian Hutchinsonian publication.[395]

Hebrew studies had also marked out the earlier Hutchinsonians, and had added to their notorious reputation, even if their approach had also brought them a certain prominence. However, Hutchinson's Hebrew method

[393] See R. Crum, *Scientific Thought in Poetry* (New York, 1931) for the anti-Newtonianism of Darwin and Goethe. See also, D.V. Erdman, *Blake: Prophet against Empire* (New York: Doubleday, 1969) for the anti-Newtonianism of William Blake.
[394] Jones, *Memoirs*: p. 35.
[395] See Appendix for a list of publications during this period.

had been largely abandoned as a tool by the Hutchinsonians, because they had been effectively defeated in the controversy over Hebrew etymologies, as has already been explained in Chapter Four.

If such distinctive parts of the Hutchinsonian system had become optional, or could be dropped, unity within orthodoxy could be achieved; but as I will suggest, this would also threaten the distinctiveness of the movement.

6.1. Last Men Standing

George Horne, (1730-1792), bishop of Norwich, had been the pioneer in moderating the Hutchinsonian cause. After the Catcott Controversy, his attention was directed elsewhere, towards David Hume and Joseph Priestley. He published a critique of Hume.[396] He also started, but could not finish, a tract, *A Defence of the Divinity of Christ,* against Priestley. His *Letters on Infidelity* is an early example of the renewed Hutchinsonian response to the resurgence of heterodoxy and its association with revolutionary ideas.[397] Horne died in 1792. However Horne's edited works, which were published in 1799 by Jones, put him into the heart of the Hutchinsonian discussions even at the end of the century.

William Jones (1726-1800), in 1777, accepted the perpetual curacy of Nayland in Suffolk. In 1792, he formed the short-lived Society for the Reformation of Principles. The result of this was the publication in the same year of a collection of tracts called *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of Time*. Even by the time J.H. Overton prepared the DNB entry for Jones, *The*

[396] George Horne, *A letter to Adam Smith* (Oxford, 1777).
[397] George Horne, *Letters on Infidelity* (London, 1784).

Scholar Armed was still in use by young students of divinity. This should not come as a surprise, despite the publication's Hutchinsonian roots. The collection reflected the ideals of the society Jones had in mind: a buttress for orthodox Christianity, not the vehicle for an Anglican sect. The fact that Jones was also associated with the well-known and respected orthodox group called the Hackney Phalanx, constituted largely by Oxford High-Churchmen, also demonstrates the direction in which Jones was heading.[398]

Another notable Hutchinsonian of this period was William Van Mildert (1765-1836). Van Mildert was to become the Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford and later bishop of Durham. He is certainly to be regarded as among the most important High-Churchmen of the pre-Tractarian era.[399]

The work which established Van Mildert's reputation as a theologian, *The Rise and Progress of Infidelity* (1806), a Boyle lecture series, was Hutchinsonian in the sense that its contents are clearly founded on principles readily identifiable as Hutchinsonian. However, this was in some ways an antiquarian revival of a system of thought from the previous century. Van Mildert put Hutchinsonianism to use in a comprehensive assault on Enlightenment rationalism, through a fideistic approach - an approach not uncommon in early nineteenth century Christian thought.[400] If one checks Van Mildert's references, it becomes clear that he made an extensive use of Hutchinsonian material. The edited twelve-volume works of William Jones,

[398] Nockles, 'Oxford Movement': pp. 270-74.
[399] E.A. Varley, *The Last of the Prince Bishops, William Van Mildert and the High Church Movement of the Early Nineteenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[400] C.D.A. Leighton, 'Antichrist's Revolution: Some Anglican Apocalypticists in the Age of the French Wars' *Journal of Religious History* 24 (2000): pp. 125-42. See also Leighton, 'Knowledge of Divine Things'.

Letters on the Septuagint (1759) by Robert Spearman, Hutchinson's *Religion of Satan* (1736) and *Natural History of the Bible* (1725) were all used by Van Mildert. He also gave references to Horne.[401]

The real effort to further the merger of Hutchinsonianism with a wider orthodoxy started with Jones's publication of the edited works of his friend Horne. Later, in the second edition, Jones wrote a new preface containing about thirty pages explaining Horne's Hutchinsonian interests and showing how consistent they were with the Holy Scriptures.[402] Jones argued that Hutchinson's teaching was beneficial to everyone; for a man who read Hutchinson would 'still be a good subject, a devout Christian, and a sound member of the Church of England, and perhaps more sound and more useful, than he would have been without them.'[403] Note that Jones does not say that one could not be 'a good subject, a devout Christian and a sound member of the Church of England' without them, just that they would be helpful.

Jones's efforts to bring Hutchinson's views, and his own, and Horne's interpretation of Hutchinson, to mainstream orthodox thought can be seen when he explained what he thought Hutchinsonians were by the end of the century. Jones, in 1799, argued that Hutchinsonians were 'confirmed Trinitarians' and went on to explain:

> …And they are kept such, by their principles; especially by what is called the Hutchinsonian philosophy of fire, light, and air. Nature shows us these three agents in the world, on which all natural life and motion depend: and these are used in the

[401] William Van Mildert, *Historical View of the Rise and Progress of Infidelity, with a Refutation of its Principles and Reasonings* (London, 1806). v.1: p. 469.
[402] William Jones, *A New Preface to the Second edition of Memoirs of the life, studies, writings etc. of George Horne* (London, 1799).
[403] James Allan Park, *Memoirs of William Stevens*: p. 83.

> Scripture to signify to us the three supreme powers of the Godhead, in the administration of the spiritual world…[404]

This commitment to Hutchinson's cosmology and belief in theological representationalism (divine analogy) had exhibited itself all through the eighteenth century as a fundamental Hutchinsonian principle and it seems still to have been so at the end of the century for Jones. On the other hand, it was as an aid to being a 'confirmed Trinitarian' rather than a prerequisite. Also, as I have suggested in the previous chapter, the followers of Hutchinson did not, by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, feel compelled to devote themselves to all aspects of the Hutchinsonian system, but could concentrate on certain aspects, leaving the rest of the system in the background.

Jones's own interest in natural philosophy perhaps kept Hutchinson's cosmoslogy more prominently in his mind than would be required of others. However, Hutchinsonians could offer a version of trinitarian analogy, even when it was separated from the details of Hutchinson's cosmological and linguistic elements and when reduced to a more straightforward, generic defence of the Trinity. Thus it was easy for them to join with others in support of an orthodox trinitarian cause. The publications of Horne and Jones himself testify to this observation.[405]

We can also observe the positive Hutchinsonian effort to unite orthodoxy against the evident danger to the religious and political constitution of the time. The later Hutchinsonians preferred to underline the

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[404] Jones, *Memoirs*: p. xiii.

[405] William Jones, *The Grand Analogy; or the Testimony of Nature and Heathen Antiquity to the Truth of a Trinity in Unity* (London, 1793). George Horne, *The Trinity in Unity. A Discourse, SPCK, Religious Tracts*, vol. 3 (London,1800), SPCK vol 2. Same article appeared in Bristol-Church of England Tract Society and in the *Publications of the Church of England Society*, vol. 3, 1824. A New edition of this article appeared in 1836.

common denominators between the fractions of orthodoxy, rather than manifesting an isolated attack from the margins of fideistic thought. One thing to add here is that this attempt to unite orthodoxy is apparent when the later Hutchinsonians are mentioned in connection with their efforts to reform orthodox principles.[406] They were no longer trying to reform the religion itself, on the grander scale of their forerunners.

In common with most other Britons, late eighteenth-century Hutchinsonians became decidedly conservative in their politics. The death of Jacobitism around the time of the accession of George III, and the consequent reconciliation of those who possessed Tory sentiments with the political establishment, the patriotic reaction to the American rebellion, and, above all, the French Revolution and the appearance of Jacobinism on the domestic scene were all stages on the way to the triumph of British conservatism in the age of French Wars.[407] The reaction of the later Hutchinsonians to the events in France fits into the struggles between conservatives and radicals that raged on for years, though much to the advantage of the conservatives. In this period, as Aston points out, 'there was no escaping the relentless press war against infidelity and its association with France.'[408] Aston, along with other historians who have touched on the

[406] See Leighton 'Hutchinsonianism: A Counter-Enlightenment Reform Movement': pp. 168-84.
[407] V. Kiernan, 'Evangelicalism and the French Revolution' *Past and Present* 1 (1952): pp. 44-56, J. McManners, *The French Revolution and the Church* (London, 1969). For a survey of Anglican Church in this period, see P.B. Nockles, *Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760-1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). J.E. Bradley, *Religion, Revolution, and English Radicalism: nonconformity in eighteenth-century politics and society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[408] Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe*, p. 246. See also, R. Hole, 'English Sermons and Tracts as Media of Debate on the French Revolution, 1789-1798,' in Mark A. Philip (ed.), *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): pp. 18-38.

subject of the Hutchinsonian response in this period, locates Horne and Jones within a context of 'a pastoral response to an intellectual attack'.[409] It is interesting that this draws a distinction between the 'pastoral' and the 'intellectual' and it may well be just to say that Hutchinsonians had nothing very fresh of their own to say in the intellectual sphere even while they were adopting what to them were somewhat fresh approaches. My intention is, while presenting the arguments made by Hutchinsonians, to show how this Hutchinsonian role in the patriotic-orthodox response contributed to the movement's demise.

The 1790s constituted a period when people remembered the events of 1688 and compared these to the existing threat of revolution. Although the precedent of the revolution of 1688 did not necessarily work in the Hanoverian dynasty's favour, for Hutchinsonians it had not necessarily eradicated the legitimacy of the hereditary succession either.[410] The revolutionary wave sweeping from the continent in the 1790s however seemed in danger of encouraging those who did draw that lesson from 1688. Jones, reflecting on the subject, drew a sharp line between the revolutions:

> The revolution of 1688, as Mr. Burke taught us, did not alter the hereditary government of this kingdom, but left laws and doctrines as sacred as they were before. The revolution of France has abolished them all.[411]

I would argue that the Hutchinsonian reaction this time did not stem from their fear of heteredoxy itself, as it had in the early eighteenth century.

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[409] Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe*, p. 102. See also, F.C. Mather, *High-Church prophet: Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733-1806) and the Caroline tradition in the later Georgian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1992), and N. Aston, 'Horne and Heterodoxy: The Defence of Anglican Beliefs in the Late Eighteenth Century,' *English Historical Review* (1993).

[410] For a discussion of the same point of view among Hutchinson's contemporaries see Clark, *English Society 1660-1832*.

[411] William Jones, *A letter to John Bull, Esq. from his second cousin Thomas Bull* (London, 1792): pp. 488-89.

Although unitarianism could be seen as enough of a threat and an outrage to orthodoxy, including Hutchinsonians, for the whole of the eighteenth century and indeed until 1813, it was not its theological threat to the Church of England that seemed acute in the late eighteenth century — that threat had certainly diminished in comparison with the early part of the century — but the threat was given a new and different edge by its link with the French Revolution and revolutionary politics in general.

The Hutchinsonian reaction in the late eighteenth century was a call to arms for orthodoxy as a whole. One line of argument for Hutchinsonians was the necessity of uniting orthodoxy and of restoring the authority of the Church, though on strictly orthodox terms: 'for if the Church may be anything,' demanded Jones: 'men will soon conclude that it may be nothing.'[412] Jones defended a definite and specific orthodox dogma promulgated through the authority of Church against a Latitudinarian 'broad Church' approach. Jones agreed with High-Churchmen who argued for Church authority. Although he valued different ideas, as long as they accorded with what he saw as orthodoxy: 'Faction, seeking rest for himself, can find none, but by inventing names and distinctions which have no sense in the mouth of a Christian.'[413] Jones, by arguing against factionalism within the Church, was surely trying to strike a balance between authority and dogma on the one side, and the useful dynamism of groups within the Church that would contribute without factionalism — an understandable reaction, as Hutchinsonians felt they had suffered more than gained by their earlier factional image. Hutchinsonianism too had to avoid the mistake of

[412] Jones, *A Letter to the Church of England* (London, 1798): p. 13.
[413] *Ibid.,* pp. 13-14.

factionalism. Jones's intentions can be explained as an effort to take the movement from the margins of orthodoxy to the very centre, but this approach also carried dangers for the distinctiveness of Hutchinsonianism.

The evils of schism were going to be one of the main targets for later Hutchinsonians. Jones argued that renouncing the authority of the Church divided people into 'sects of Anabaptists, Quakers, Independents, etc., fall into the heresies of Arius, Socinius, etc. which degenerate into infidelity itself.'[414] So accordingly, Jones made a list of enemies in his preface to the edition of Horne's *Works*:

> Their first enemies are to be found among sceptics, infidels, and atheists. Their next enemies are those who are afraid of believing too much: such as our Socinians and their confederates, who admit Christianity as a fact but deny [it] as a doctrine[415]

No orthodox Church of England man need have anything to fear from this attack.

Two years later, when Stevens published the edited works of Jones, he added Republicans to this list.[416] The world of Jones is somehow simpler than that of Hutchinson: there are the orthodox, whether Hutchinsonian or otherwise, and there are the heterodox — the other.

Hutchinsonians participated in the conservative movement of the time, which required a good deal of patriotism and defence of the religious and political constitution.[417] William Jones published *The Scholar Armed*, a collection of writings chosen by Horne and himself. The selection, when

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[414] Jones, *The Churchman's Catechism* (London, 1794): p. 423.
[415] Jones, *Memoirs*: p. xii.
[416] William Stevens (ed.), *The Theological, Philosophical and Miscellaneous Works of The Rev. William Jones in Twelve Volumes to Which is prefixed a Short Account of His Life and Writings* (London, 1801): p. xxxv.
[417] William Jones, *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of the time… A Collection of the Tracts on the principles and evidences of Christianity, the constitution of the Church, and the Authority of civil government* (London, 1795).

carefully checked, is not chiefly made up of Hutchinsonian material. It is rather the assembly of a canon of orthodoxy. John Ellis and the non-jurors, Charles Leslie, Roger North and William Law all appear, as well as George Horne. All of the writers mentioned above wrote able treatises in their different times defending the orthodox cause against one heterodox tendency or another. The objective of the Society for the Reformation of Principles was to promote a dialogue between the different layers of orthodoxy in order to establish and highlight orthodox principles, not to engage in fierce argument on the proper tools for reaching them. Jones's task in forming the society was explained by his biographer Stevens:

> Some gentlemen, who are undoubted friends to our civil and ecclesiastical constitution as by law established, having farther considered the state of things, as set forth in a late Proposal for a Reformation in Principles; and seeing how many ill-affected and seditious associations are formed and forming amongst us, to the corruption of religion, learning, and good manners; the disturbing of the public peace, the endangering of life and property, and of every thing that can be dear to Englishmen and Christians, do resolve, to the utmost of their power, to take such measures, in a literary way only, as shall be thought most conducive to the preservation of our religion, government, and laws. And they do most earnestly and affectionately call upon persons, as conceiving that there is not, at this time, an object of greater importance than that which they are now recommending to the attention and support of their countrymen.[418]

This is an indication that Hutchinsonians took heterodoxy to be a threat just as much political as religious in its nature. Religion, government and laws, as Stevens put it, were subjected to the same danger that, in Hutchinsonian eyes, branched out from infidelity. Horne and Van Mildert elaborated this much further. Horne's *Letters on Infidelity* (1784) and Mildert's *Boyle Lectures on the Rise and Progress of infidelity* (1806) are

[418] Stevens, *Works of William Jones*: p. 381.

expositions of a similar thinking. Hutchinsonians, in their treatment of current political and religious affairs, were not much different from other orthodox members of the Hanoverian Church. Elizabeth Varley has recognized their theological sympathies with the Non-Jurors, such as Leslie, Hickes, and Law, who were used by Horne and Jones to strengthen their arguments against the infidelity of the age.[419] However, the question arises, to what extent the stances Horne, Jones and Van Mildert adopted truly rested on Hutchinsonian principles. There are things to be said on that matter. The place of the writings of Horne, Jones and Van Mildert, and the place of Hutchinsonian principles, among the considerable body of writings on the conservatism that sustained the British regime during the period of the French Wars requires attention.

The emergence of the 'Club of Nobody's Friends' in 1800 may be said to mark the beginnings of Hutchinsonianism's last phase. The Club[420] was named in honour of William Stevens, a prosperous London businessman and the treasurer of Queen Anne's Bounty. (Stevens sometimes used the Hebrew word for 'nobody' as a pseudonym.) He was a cousin of George Horne and the lifelong friend of William Jones whose works he edited. Stevens most probably established the society 'Nobody's Friends,' after the collapse of Jones's Society for the Reformation of Principles. Stevens himself wrote little, though his titles indicate the linking of ecclesiastical and political constitutions.[421]

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[419] Varley: p. 7

[420] The list of the members of this group has been published, see *The Club of Nobody's Friends: A Biographical List of the Members since Its Foundation, 21st June 1800 to 30th September 1885,* printed for private circulation (1938).

[421] William Stevens, *An Essay on the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Church* (London, 1773); *A Discourse on the English Constitution* (London, 1776); *Strictures on a*

His concerns seem to have been to defend the reputation of his friends, such as Jones, and to support the dominant political conservatism of his day. He was, for example, a keen defender of the doctrine of passive obedience. The Club upheld High-Church attitudes like passive obedience and divine right against republican ideas. Thus, the main effort was to counter the influence of the French Revolution. The society included not only clergymen, but also lay people, and carried these ideas on, far into the nineteenth century. G. Le G. Norgate, who wrote the DNB entry for Stevens, acknowledged the existence of the club as late as 1897. It is doubtful though if the Club carried Hutchinsonianism so far into the new century. The moderation taken up by Horne and Jones in an effort to unite orthodoxy against the threats to the establishment had actually undermined the distinctiveness of Hutchinsonianism. Stevens himself, however, did not hide his own Hutchinsonian sympathies.[422]

It may seem as though those who may be identified as the representatives of Hutchinsonianism in the early nineteenth century lacked any interest in Hutchinson's cosmological speculations. When one traces Hutchinsonian publications after the 1790s, one sees that there is only one publication concerning studies on nature. Jones published a piece, which was not explicitly anti-Newtonian and which was aimed at children. *The Book of Nature* had a successful publication history up until 1855, to its fourteenth edition. Jones maintained that the whole of nature was to be spiritualised and sacramentalized. Jones's charming zoological writings have much in them

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Sermon entitled 'The Principles of Revolution Vindicated by Richard Watson' (Cambridge, 1777).

[422] See James Allan Park, *Memoirs of William Stevens*: pp. 15-19, for Stevens's Hutchinsonian sympathies as expressed by his biographer

that remind us of medieval bestiaries, but little that is specifically Hutchinsonian.[423] In general, what we observe is a more detached approach among these later Hutchinsonians to the writings of the master and a willingness to develop the principles emerging from his ideas in their own ways.

Cosmological speculation in the earlier phase of Hutchinsonianism was an integral part of the Newtonian/anti-Newtonian debate and of the Hutchinsonian defence of the Trinity. As the question of Newtonianism was no longer a burning issue, nineteenth-century sympathizers of Hutchinson did not feel the need to press Hutchinson's arguments over the cosmos. Indeed they seemed to lack any interest in Hutchinson's cosmological speculations. Though they cited Hutchinsonians and authors valued by Hutchinsonians, concern was with philosophical and theological argumentation divorced from cosmology. Analogy remained important to them, but it was no longer an analogy that relied on Hutchinson's cosmos.

Horne cited Hutchinsonians and authors valued by Hutchinsonians. His concern was primarily with theological argumentation. For example, he acknowledged that his calling gave him little opportunity for 'nice enquiry into philosophical minutiae'.[424] One would certainly assume that this was at the end of the century, for Horne had written himself on cosmology in his early years at Oxford. Still less would Hutchinson have assigned such a scale to these philosophical matters.

[423] William Jones, *The Book of Nature, or the True Sense of things explained and made easy to the capacities of children* (London, 1792).
[424] *George Horne to… Browning* [no date], Cambridge University Library, Horne Papers, Add. MSS 8134/B/1: f. 44.

In the year 1799, when Jones broke down the Hutchinsonian ideals into specifics, it became clear that divine analogy concerning the representation of the Trinity in the material cosmos and in revelation was the backbone of the movement as Horne and Jones saw it.[425] Jones did not mention specifically any particular method with the Hebrew of the Old Testament, nor did he feel the need explicitly to refute Newton or to advertise a specific cosmology as necessary components of the Hutchinsonian system. Jones argued that Hutchinsonians believed:

> That in both Testaments divine things are explained and confirmed to the understandings of men, by allusions to the natural creation. I say confirmed; because the Scripture is so constant and uniform in the use it makes of natural objects, that such an analogy appears between the sensible and spiritual world, as carries with it sensible evidence to the truth of revelation…[426]

Such an argument expressed in such terms — that there was an analogy between the spiritual truth of revelation and the natural world, and that important truths about the natural world could still be obtained from revelation — were hardly unique to Hutchinsonians. It shows how Jones was ready to reduce Hutchinsonian understanding of divine analogy to a commonly acceptable orthodox view. In 1793 alone, he published two books on trinitarian theological representationalism, one being *The Grand Analogy*, the other *Heathen Antiquity to the Truth of Trinity in Unity*, the latter going back to the heathen symbols of the deity, arguing that they were representations of Trinity. [427]

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[425] William Jones, *A New Preface to the Second Edition of Memoirs of the Life, Studies, Writings, &c. of the Right Rev. George Horne* (London, 1799): p. xii.
[426] *Ibid.*
[427] Stevens, *Works of William Jones*: p. xl.

6.2. The Hutchinsonian Reputation in the Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

William Hurd, an advocate of natural religion and ethics, in his book called *A New Universal History* which came out in 1788, talks about the late eighteenth-century Hutchinsonians. According to Hurd's rather mocking account, Hutchinsonians were a humble group who met in London alehouses, 'Traducing the words "morality" and good works,' and denouncing 'natural religion in the name of grace'.[428] The Hutchinsonians were depicted as being 'rather sentimental' and

> they are to be found among almost all denominations of Protestants, and the notion itself has been the means of reviving the study of the Hebrew language. It has stimulated many persons to enquire into the sacred oracles, and notwithstanding the levity of the present age….[429]

Hurd gives a fairly detailed account of the late eighteenth-century followers of Hutchinson. His account, for the first time, gives information on the ways in which they gathered, though whether the information is to be trusted is not so clear:

> As for the places of worship, properly speaking, they have none, for those of the lower sort who reside in London, meet, like the Muggletonians, in public houses. We have been present at one of these meetings, in a club-room up stairs, at a noted public house in the Strand.[430]

Hurd's comments on the members of Hutchinsonian group are not complimentary:

> The membership consisted, for the most part, of the discarded Methodists, Independents, and Sandemanians; but we could not find one person that had made choice of this scheme till he had

[428] William Hurd, A *New Universal History of the Religious Rites, Ceremonies and Customs of the Whole World, or A Complete and Impartial View of all the Religions in the Various Nations of the Universe* (London, 1788): pp. 824-25.
[429] *Ibid.*
[430] *Ibid.*

> been expelled out of another. And this leads us to consider the vast impropriety in the conduct of our modern Calvinistical Dissenters, in excommunicating their members.[431]

Hurd, however, provides what might be valuable information on the nature of Hutchinsonian meetings:

> At present, when the Hutchinsonians meet in their public assemblies, one of them reads, and another explains a passage of scripture as well as he can; then a third prays; and when they have drank a little porter they are dismissed.[432]

Hurd was a doctor of divinity, though this is the sum of the biographical information available. Despite its tone, the information provided by him needs to be taken into account, for it demonstrates a very significant point about how the Hutchinsonian scripture-based system of thought — with a variety of interests, cosmological, linguistic, etc. attached to it — was perhaps tending to be transformed by the end of the eighteenth century almost to a simple attachment to the Bible: that, in itself, an orthodox Protestant attitude, not uncommon at all. One might also read into this a reputation for a somewhat particular, perhaps eccentric reading of scripture, but then Hurd is a hostile witness.

The Hutchinsonians were essentially a British movement. On the other side of the Atlantic, Horne though seems to have enjoyed a reputation. George Horne's commentary on the Psalms appeared in Philadelphia in 1792.[433] Jones's twelve volume edited works of Horne were published in New York at 1848. Yet apart from Samuel Johnson, the Dean of King's College, New York, whose contact with Hutchinsonianism occurred in the 1750s, there is no evidence of a Hutchinsonian following in Americas.

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[431] *Ibid.*
[432] *Ibid.*
[433] R. Singerman, *Judaica Americana: A Bibliography of Publications to 1900*, 2 vols. (New York, Westport, Conn., and London, 1990), vol. 1: p. 22.

As we move on into the nineteenth century, it is hard to find Hutchinsonians still actively engaged in natural history. Nevertheless, the ideas of both Catcott Junior, and Jones were remembered in various publications of the time. G.B. Greenough evaluated Catcott's work in his study on geology as a discipline.[434] In 1832, William Kirby gave Hutchinson's physico-theology an airing, albeit without acknowledgement, in his Bridgewater treatise.[435] W.D. Conybeare and J. Philips, in their publication on the geology of England and Wales, paid tribute to Catcott's observations on the land strata as contributing to the study of geology.[436] M. Neve in his unpublished dissertation on natural philosophy in Bristol and Bath in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has pointed towards the ongoing legacy of Catcott's studies on geology:

> Catcott's geological work was not forgotten by the scriptural geologists of the early nineteenth century. W. Buckland, in his Reliquiae Diluvianae (London, 1823) refers extensively to Catcott, and was relying on notes taken on Catcott's manuscripts in Bristol by the geologist W. D. Conybeare. Conybeare himself praised a number of aspects of Catcott's work.[437]

In a tract published in 1816, George Stanley Faber talked about the ideas of the Hutchinsonians on the Deluge with a special reference to Catcott's *Treatise on the Deluge*.[438] Charles Lyell, in his study on the history of geology mentioned Hutchinson himself as anti-Woodwardian in matters

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[434] G.B. Greenough, *Critical Examination of the first principles of Geology* (London, 1819).
[435] William Kirby, *On the Power Wisdom and Goodness of God as Manifested in the Creation of Animals and their History Habits and Instincts*, 2 vols (London: William Pickering, 1835) vol. 1: pp. xvii-cv, cii-ciii.
[436] W.D. Conybeare and J.Philips, *An Outline of the Geology of England and Wales* (London, 1822): p. xxv.
[437] M. Neve, 'Natural Philosophy, Medicine, and Culture of Science in Provincial England: The Cases of Bristol 1790-1850, and Bath 1750-1820.' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University College London, 1984): p. 62, n. 9. See Auction Catalogue of W. D. Conybeare in the Bodleian Library, dated London, 1857 (MS. Bibl. III. 528.9).
[438] George Stanley Faber, *The Origin of Pagan Idolatry ascertained from Historical Testimony…* (London: F. and C. Rivingstons, St. Paul's Churchyard, 1816): p. 281.

of geology and refers to Catcott Junior as his follower.[439] Yet while Catcott's geology was consistent with Hutchinsonianism, one might ask if it was necessarily in itself Hutchinsonian; it could just as easily become submerged in the wider geological support for Flood. There is no doubt that Catcott Junior was a Hutchinsonian. However, the way the nineteenth century remembered him largely stripped him of his Hutchinsonian tendencies.

One study in the nineteenth century mentioned Hutchinsonianism as a school of thought that was centred on the defence of the Trinity. In the year 1844, a publication by W. H. Mill mentioned the religious doctrine of the Hutchinsonian school as being totally dependent on the divinity of Christ in the Holy Trinity for the redemption of mankind.[440] Yet again this does not sound very distinctive, except perhaps in expressing the degree to which trinitarianism occupied their minds. This is very crucial in the sense that, whatever changes the movement had gone through over time, the defence of the Trinity started as and remained its primary goal and motivation. Again, perhaps only in degree was this in itself an identifying, distinctive characteristic. This in turn perhaps explains how the Hutchinsonians could be largely reduced to a current within mainstream orthodoxy by the end of the eighteenth century. Even at the end of the nineteenth century, there were people who were interested in reading Hutchinson, part of the reason being his spiritual tone and his promise of a special insight into the Bible. However, this was not enough to make the 'ism' endure. Later Hutchinsonians, compared to their earlier counterparts, were so preoccupied with reinforcing and uniting orthodoxy, or in preaching against the dangers

[439] Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology* (London, 1832): p. 50.
[440] W. H. Mill, *Five Sermons on the Temptation of Christ our Lord in the Wilderness* (Cambridge, 1844): p. 155, note L.

of heterodoxy in respect of its links to revolution, that they contributed to their own demise. Their specifically Hutchinsonian characteristics were less and less recognizable, apart from the references here and there to their predecessors. The move to moderation, led by Horne, thus ended up with an integration into a wider orthodoxy. The features that had made Hutchinsonians different at the beginning of the eighteenth century, such as their interest in Hebrew studies and their specific method of the studying the language, and their violent anti-Newtonianism, were not identifying features by the end of the eighteenth century. Being a Hutchinsonian in the nineteenth century meant little more that than being an orthodox churchman with a penchant for including earlier Hutchinsonians amongst their reading.

CONCLUSION

One of the main objectives of this study has been to provide a survey of Hutchinsonianism that pays due regard to a chronology of the movement that will allow an assessment of the whole movement. Too often the movement has been looked at only during a particular phase or as something timeless and unchanging. The second main objective has been to explain in particular the reasons that gave birth to the movement in the early eighteenth century and the reasons that contributed to its demise. The movement did have a relatively specific beginning and end, and both occurred in particular and distinct contexts. The third main objective has been to define Hutchinsonianism in a way that gives a true picture of both its multi-faceted nature and what integrated the movement, an approach that requires an assembly of disciplines. Looking at Hutchinsonianism too much through the lens of one of its aspects has often distorted our picture of the movement. To correct this, natural philosophy, epistemology, biblical exegesis, Hebrew studies and the historiography of religion have had to be tackled, giving due prominence to each, but also relating each to the whole.

In the early eighteenth century, a defence of Protestant Trinitarian Christianity was particularly needed. As is explained in Chapter Two, Hutchinsonianism emerged as a response to the perceived threats from heterodoxy in the early eighteenth century. For Hutchinsonians, this anti-trinitarian assault was a beast with several heads: an attack on the nature of God, both in terms of his transcendence and in terms of the Trinity, and an attack on the authority of scripture and its ability to act as the foundation of a

Protestant trinitarian Church. So the system that Hutchinson elaborated, set out in Chapter Three, was designed to be a complete and a self-sufficient system, with the aim of bolstering the trinitarian and scriptural foundations of Anglican religion against its assailants and of cleansing cosmology of what seemed the deistic and pantheistic tendencies of Newtonianism.

Chapter Two also provided insight into the individuals who were early and devoted followers of Hutchinson. By giving the evidence for connections between them, I tried to show that from the very early stages of the movement, the sense of an intellectual group was evident with a high degree of dedication to Hutchinson's ideas. Early followers established the reputation of Hutchinsonianism as the movement led by an uncompromising group who had a mission to re-establish the trinitarian paradigm on what they thought the only secure and undeniable foundations. This insistence on the possession of the monopoly of truth came eventually to exhibit itself as a problem in the controversies they were going to join and did not help their reputation in wider orthodox circles. The first half of the eighteenth century was a period when orthodoxy in general came to regard Hutchinsonianism as something of an oddity, and sometimes worse, because of the Hutchinsonians' vigorously pursued, rather cryptic methods.

The interlocking components of the Hutchinsonian system of thought, as set out in Chapter Three, show all of the elements of the defence as important to Hutchinsonians, all directed towards a defence of a Protestant, trinitarian Christianity. Yet even then, the desired integration was not quite complete. The High-Church aspect of Hutchinsonian exegesis was certainly important to Hutchinson himself and most of his early followers, but not

really essential to the system, thus allowing the possibility of 'Hutchinsonian' dissenters, as long as they were trinitarian dissenters.

A Protestant religion had to be based on scripture, an authentic, revealed text. Hutchinsonians argued for an authentic, reliable, revealed text based on a Bible with its Old Testament portion restored to the unpointed Hebrew as a basis for exegesis. The Old Testament was of particular importance because of the attacks on the coherence of the two Testaments in the early eighteenth century and because of its less than obvious trinitarianism in a non-Hutchinsonian version. Of course, it was orthodox biblical exegesis that the Old Testament prefigured the New Testament in various ways — much work along these lines had been done in Middle Ages and even before. However, perhaps it had not been felt necessary to stress, beyond the Christianity of the Old Testament, its trinitarian nature, until trinitarian Christianity had come to feel under serious attack from within Christianity in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Use of the unpointed text allowed the Hutchinsonians to find sufficient trinitarianism in the Old Testament for its defence.

It was also a natural, if not universal, consequence of Protestant devotion to the sacred text, to argue that all knowledge, and especially knowledge of divine things, should be found within the sacred text. So, Hutchinsonians adapted the fashionable sensationalism, the idea that human knowledge could only be acquired through the senses. Sensations concerned knowledge derived from the material world and therefore could normally only give knowledge of the material world, except where those sensations were involved in reading the sacred, revealed text, which in turn could be a

basis for a more sure knowledge even of the material world than could be obtained from ordinary sense perceptions of it.

The reason why Hutchinsonianism set out with such a rigorous and vigorous anti-Newtonian agenda has also been explained in Chapters Two and Three. Hutchinsonians did not see Newton and his followers as simply searchers after the truth about the material cosmos, but as moving beyond that, to aim to reach conclusions about God and his relationship to the cosmos, and to what the Hutchinsonsians (not alone in this) saw as Arian, deist and unitarian conclusions.

The Hutchinsonian interest in history of religion derived from the need to turn this deist weapon against its makers. To argue that the Trinity, not just some indeterminate natural religion, was as old as Creation, the Hutchinsonians took up this weapon. By tracing the Trinity in heathen symbols of the deity, they came to the conclusion that if Christianity was 'as old as Creation,' as their enemy Tindal put it, then the trinitarian revelation was just as old.

Among the controversies in which the Hutchinsonians were involved was the controversy over *Elahim*, and it was this that put them centre-stage in the intellectual world of the mid-eighteenth century. As a method to highlight the Trinitarian system that Hutchinson was the architect, Hebraic studies was a powerful tool in Hutchinsonian hands. Their involvement in the controversy over Hebrew etymologies made it clear for orthodox and non-orthodox alike that they were uncompromisingly insistent on what they thought to be the true method of dealing with the Old Testament. The controversy, which started in 1735 and lasted until 1773, displayed not only

how Hutchinsonians dealt with the Hebrew text, but also testified to the abrasive nature of the movement in the face of criticism from orthodoxy and heterodoxy alike. Only in the later stages of the controversy, which coincided with the first efforts at moderation by Hutchinsonians in the 1750s and 1760s, and of course due to their defeat in the controversy, can one observe an attempt to conciliate non-Hutchinsonian trinitarian Protestants. In one sense the Hutchinsonians were not completely defeated; they did help to establish the unpointed text of the Old Testament as the basis for the interpretation of Biblical Hebrew; it was only their distinctive method with that text that could not triumph, but for them that destroyed its usefulness because it could no longer be used in the same way to re-emphasise the Trinity. Thus, with the loss of the Hebrew branch, so important to the movement's coherence and credibility, the movement was a less full bodied one.

Hutchinsonianism at its outset was designed to be a complete system that met the needs of orthodox, Protestant, Trinitarian Christians in the circumstances of the early eighteenth century, given the threats to their position that existed at that time. Later, there was less need, in its systematic sense, for a full Hutchinsonianism. One reason for this was that some of the threats had faded, like the threat of 'natural religion' within the mainstream Anglican Church and the religious threat that had been perceived in Newtonianism; another was that the Hutchinsonian Hebrew method had met with defeat. The realization that they were falling into the margins of orthodox thought led some Hutchinsonians to pursue a more moderate and tolerant approach, as explained in Chapter Five.

It was amongst the Oxford Hutchinsonians that this change can be most easily seen. Although the early following at Oxford, around 1734–1740, fully shared the early Hutchinsonian mission and embraced the multi-faceted aspects of the movement, later in the 1760s one can see a change. The initial stages of this were mainly presentational, without altering the true nature of the movement. One can see the beginnings of a suppression of the display of attachment to Hutchinson, rather than the loss of that attachment itself. This also exhibited itself in an increasing use of other philosophical and theological influences, apart from Hutchinson and his close early followers. Then there came a moment, roughly around the 1770s, when one can see that a real change in the movement had happened after all. Parts of the system, particularly Hutchinson's Hebrew method, were virtually abandoned by Hutchinsonians.

Moderation took another turn with the increasing conservatism between the 1770s and the 1790s, influenced by the American and French revolutions. This time, as explained in Chapter Six, the Hutchinsonians joined the ranks of a much more generalised orthodoxy in defence of orthodox values. What is particularly important to mention about this is that Hutchinsonians, with the apparently renewed threat of heterodoxy to the political and religious establishment, did not take up again the aggressive rhetoric in favour of their own brand of orthodoxy, as they had in the early eighteenth century. Their wish to embrace a wider, less sectarian orthodoxy in vexed times like these contributed to the movement's demise. The set of beliefs and methods that had made them stand out in the ranks of orthodoxy

were finessed or quietly dropped to allow a merger with that wider orthodoxy.

Quite quickly into the nineteenth century, all that came to remain of the movement seems to have consisted of the fondness of certain writers for using Hutchinson or other eighteenth-century Hutchinsonian writers in usually not specifically Hutchinsonian causes.

APPENDIX

AN ANNOTATED LIST OF HUTCHINSONIAN TRACTS

This list was put together from four different sources:

Papers of Catcott. Bristol Reference Library
Ref. No.149.3 H/no/1154

British Library Catalogue

Bodleian Library Catalogue

Dictionary of National Biography

The list is arranged author by author, in order of the date of their first Hutchinsonian publication. For each author, brief biographical information and comments are given, followed by a list of their Hutchinsonian publications.

***John Hutchinson** (1674–1737): founder of the movement. Hutchinson was born at Spennithorne, near Middleham, Yorkshire in 1674. Hutchinson died in 1737.*

- *Moses's Principia* (London, 1724)
- *Essay towards a Natural History of the Bible* (London, 1725)
- *Moses's Sine Principio* (London, 1730)
- *A Treatise of Power Essential and Mechanical* (London, 1732)
- *Glory or Gravity Essential and Mechanical* (London, 1733)
- *The Covenant of Cherubim* (London, 1734)
- *The Religion of Satan* (London, 1736)

- *Remarks upon the Observations on a Sermon preached before the Corporation of Bristol* (London, 1737)
- *Glory or Gravity: The Second or Mechanical Part taken from MS of* (London, 1738). (printed by Julius Bate)
- *An attempt to explain to Oeconomy of the Human Frame upon the*
- *Principles of the New Philosophy* (London, 1739) (printed Julius Bate)
- *The Use of Reason recovered by the Data in Christianity from a MS of the late John Hutchinson* (published by Julius Bate) (London, 1739)

Benjamin Holloway (1691–1759): divine, born at Stony Stratford, Buckinghamshire, about 1691. After passing through Westminster School, he was admitted as a pensioner of St. John's College, Cambridge, on 4 February 1707/8 and left as LL.B. in 1713. He took holy orders in July 1723. Holloway died at Middleton-Stoney on 10 April 1759, and was buried there on the 13th. Holloway knew and corresponded with Hutchinson and the immediate circle of followers including Spearman, Bate and Catcott.

- *An After-Commendation of the New Lutheran* (Oxford, 1727)
- *Lemmata Principorum Mosaicum* (Oxford, 1734)
- *The Commemorative Sacrifice, A Sermon by Benjamin Holloway preached at the visitation Holden at Woodstock* (London, 1736).
- *The nullity of Repentance without Faith in the Redemption by Jesus Christ, proved from Holy Scripture, in three Sermons* (Oxford, 1739).
- *The Doctrine of Repentance vindicated … Being a Supplement to Three Sermons on Repentance … To which is added an account of the State of Man, his natural and Spiritual Powers, etc***.** (London, 1739)
- *Experimental Philosophy Asserted and Defended* (London, 1740).
- *Some Remarks on a Pamphlet, entitled The Morality of Religion, in a letter to the Bishop of Winchester. Bishop Hoadley* (London, 1741)

- *Marginal Animadversions on Mr. Costard's two Dissertations on the Kesitah and the Hermai* (London, 1750)
- *Remarks on Dr. Sharp's Pieces on the Words Elohim and Berith. Among which, In Shewing the Absolute Unfitness of the Arabic Tongue to give a Root to the Divine Name Elahim, Some account is Given of the Chaldee, Syriac, Samaritan, and Arabic Dialects, Shewing them to have been all one Language, etc.* (Oxford, 1751)
- *Originals Physical and Theological, Sacred and Profane, Or an Essay Towards a Discovery of the First Descriptive Ideas in Things, by Discovery of the Simple or Primary Roots in Words* (Oxford, 1751)
- *Letter and Spirit, or annotations upon the Holy Scriptures according to Both* (Oxford, 1753)
- *A Vindication of the Printed Hebrew* (London, 1753).
- *The Primaevity and Preeminency of the Sarced Hebrew, Above all Other Languages, Vindicated, from Repeated Attempts of … Dr. Hunt to level it with the Arabic and other Oriental Dialects, in a Letter to a Friend. With a Word in the Preface to Dr. Shuckford* (Oxford, 1754).

Duncan Forbes (1685–1747): President of the Court of Session, born 10th November 1685, the second son of Duncan Forbes (1644–1704) of Culloden and Bunchrew, near Inverness, by his wife, Mary Innes. He died 10 December 1747. Forbes knew and corresponded with Hutchinson, Bate and Spearman. Forbes remained the most respectable of Hutchinsonians during his age. In a contemporary account of the Hutchinsonians, the adherents of the creed were criticized for their harshness of expression; but Duncan Forbes was regarded as the 'one single exception'.[441]

[441] Hurd, *New Universal History*: p. 763.

- *A Letter to A Bishop Concerning Some Important Discoveries in Philosophy and Theology* (London, 1732). This tract was translated into French.
- *Reflexions on the Sources of Incredulity* (Edinburgh, 1750).
- *Some Thoughts concerning Religion, Natural and Revealed.* (Edinburgh, 1735). This work was also translated into French.

Alexander Stopford Catcott (1692–1749): divine and poet, born in Long Acre, in the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Westminster, 10 October 1692. He was admitted to Merchant Taylor's School 3 May 1699, and elected thence to St. John's College, Oxford, where he matriculated 2 July 1709. In 1712 he was elected a fellow of his college, 'where he putt on a Civil Law gown, and took the degree of LL.B 6 March 1717'. Catcott knew Hutchinson, the Bate brothers, Spearman and Gittins.

- *The Supreme and Inferior Elahim* (London, 1736). Catcott initiated the long-lasting Hutchinsonian controversy over the etymology of the word *Elahim.*
- *The State of Case between Mr. Bedford and Mr. Catcott in answer to Mr. Bedford's examination* (London, 1738)
- *Tractatus in quo Testamentum* (London, 1738). In the year 1822, Alexander Maxwell translated this pamphlet and published it with his own addition, 'Preliminary Dissertation on the Character and Writings of Moses'.
- *A Volume of Sermons by the late Mr. Catcott* (London, 1753)

Julius Bate (1711–1771): Divine born in 1711, being one of the ten children of the Rev. Richard Bate, by his wife, Elizabeth Stanhope. He entered St. John's College, Cambridge, became B.A. 1730, and M.A. 1740. Hutchinson was patronised by the Duke of Somerset, who allowed him to appoint Bate to

the rectory of Sutton, near the Duke's seat of Petworth. Bate attended Hutchinson in his last illness (1737), and was associated with Spearman in the publication of Hutchinson's works. Bate died at Arundel 20 January 1771. Bate was a missionary for the movement, knew all the contemporary followers of Hutchinson. Hutchinson mentioned his promotional activities: 'Julius Bate has taken journey and has gained ten more persons'. [442]

- *Examiner Examined, or Mr. Bedford's Examination considered* (London, 1739). Bate was involved in the Hutchinsonian controversy over *Elahim* with this work.
- *An Essay Towards Explaining the Third Chapter of Genesis, and the Spiritual Sense of the Law. In which the third Proposition of the Divine Legation, and what the author hath brought to Support it, are Considered* (London, 1741)
- *The Philosophical Principles of Moses Asserted; and Defended from the Misinterpretations of the Rev. Mr. David Jennings, In a late treatise, intituled, An Introduction to the use of the Globes, with an Appendix on the First Chapter of Genesis* (London, 1744)
- *Remarks upon Mr. Warburton's Remarks* (London, 1745)
- *The Faith of the Ancient Jews in the Law of Moses, and the Evidence of the Types Vindicated. In a Letter to the Rev. Dr. Stebbing* (London, 1747)
- *Proposals for printing, by Subscription, the Philosophical and Theological Works of … Mr. Hutchinson, together with all his manuscripts* (London, 1747). There were three editions of this pamphlet, the third edition appearing in 1748.
- *An Advertisement* in relation to the above proposals, probably the second or third edition (London, 1747).
- *Defence of Hutchinson's plan: Being an answer to the 'Modest Apology,' etc. In a letter to a country clergyman* (London, 1748).

[442] John Hutchinson to Alexander Stopford Catcott, 3 September 1736. Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence. B26063: f. 15.

- *Michah v.2. and Mat.ii.6 Reconciled; With some Remarks on Dr. Hunt's Latin Oration at Oxford, 1748. And Dr. Grey's Last Words of David, and David's Numbering the People* (London, 1749)
- Bate and Spearman (eds.), *Works of John Hutchinson* (London, 1748)
- *Animadversions on a letter to Dr. Waterland* (London, 1751)
- *A Defence of Mr. Hutchinson's Tenets in philosophy and Divinity in answer to the objections of Mr. Berington* (London, 1751)
- *A Hebrew Grammar: Formed on the Usage of the Words by the Inspired Writers: being An Attempt to Make the Learning of Hebrew Easy* (London, 1751). In 1756, *An Hebrew Grammar* was published in Dublin. In 1872 it was published in London again
- *The Scripture meaning of Aleim and Berith justified against the exceptions of Dr. Sharp's …* (London, 1751)
- *The Blessing of Judah by Jacob considered: the Aera of Daniel's weeks ascertained, and the Texts Construed, Chap. IX. Ver.23-7. In Two Dissertations* (London, 1753)
- *The Integrity of the Hebrew Text, and many passages of Scripture, vindicated from the Objections and Misconstructions of Mr. Kennicott* (London, 1754)
- *An Answer to Sharp's revision* (London, 1755)
- *An Answer to Sharp's second part* (London, 1755)
- *An Enquiry into the Occasional and Standing Similitudes of the Lord God in the Old and the New Testament, or, the Forms made use of By Jehovah Aleim to represent themselves to true believers, before and Since the Law by Moses. With a dissertation on the Supposed Confusion of Tongues at Babel* (London, 1756)
- *Remarks Upon Dr. Benson's Sermon on the Gospel-method of Justification* (London, 1758)
- *Critica Hebraea, A Hebrew-English Dictionary, Without Points: in which the several derivatives are reduced to their Genuine Roots, their Specific significations from thence illustrated, and exemplified by passages from Scripture* (London, 1767)

James Bate: The elder brother of Julius Bate (born about 1703; B.A. from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 1722, M.A. from St John's, 1727). Hutchinson in a letter stated that John Bate had been called 'Rabbi' in Cambridge.[443] In another letter to A. S. Catcott in 1736, Hutchinson wrote that James Bate had been in danger of being called Hutchinsonian.[444] This shows the negative appeal of being a Hutchinsonian as early as 1736, even if the Hutchinsonianism of James Bate is not something known. James Bate later attended Horace Walpole, Ambassador to Paris, as his chaplain, and on his return obtained the rectory of St Paul's, Deptford, on the presentation of the King, 1731.[445] In the Catcott Correspondence, there is also a letter written by James Bate to A. S. Catcott right after Hutchinson's death. In the letter it is clear that James Bate was involved with Hutchinsonians so much so that he informed Catcott about organizing Hutchinson's notes, works and correspondence after his death.[446] James Bate appears to be in the Hutchinsonian circle but his later publications were not necessarily along Hutchinsonian lines.[447]

- *Methodism displayed; or, remarks upon Mr. Whitefield's answer, to the Bishop of London's last pastoral letter. In a letter to Mr. Whitefield* (London, 1739)
- *Infidelity scourged: or, Christianity vindicated. I. From the scandalous aspersions of Mr. Thomas Chubb, in his four late dissertations ... II. From the sophistry of a late book called,*

[443] Hutchinson to A. S. Catcott, 5 August 1736. Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence, B26063: f. 14.
[444] Hutchinson to A. S. Catcott, 14 October 1736. Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence, B26063: f. 15.
[445] *An Annotated Catalogue*: p. 40.
[446] James Bate to A. S. Catcott, 2 March 1737. Bristol Reference Library, Catcott Correspondence, B26063: f. 20.
[447] *An Annotated Catalogue*: p. 40.

Christianity not founded on argument. Containing a full, clear, and ('tis hoped) a satisfactory answer, to some of the most popular objections to revelation (London, 1746)

Daniel Gittins (d. 1761): Rector of Southstoke and Vicar of Leominster. Son of Daniel Gittins of Goring. Daniel Gittins knew Julius Bate and Catcott Senior. In 1739, Gittins joined the Hutchinsonian Controversy over *Elahim*.

- *An Answer to a pamphlet, entitled, An Examination of Mr. Hutchinson's Remarks and Mr. Catcott's answer to the Observations on his Sermon preached at Bristol etc.* (London, 1739)
- *Observations on Some Sermons Preached at Lady Moyer's Lectures at St. Paul's, 1739 and 1740, by A. Bedford* (London, 1741)
- *A serious and earnest address to all orders and degrees of men amongst us, a Sermon* (London, 1755)
- *Remarks on the Tenets and Principles of the Quakers, as contained in the Theses Theologicae of Robert Barclay* (London, 1758)

Samuel Pike (1717-1773): Pike was a Hutchinsonian in his early years; he later became a Glasite or Sandemanian.[448] His main Hutchinsonian tracts are one on Hebrew and one on Cosmology. Pike in his works declared that he had offered a new theory of matter. It was, however, obviously anti-Newtonian and had only slight deviations from Hutchinson's idea that matter is active, and he did not deny the existence of occult forces in nature.

- *Philosophica Sacra or the principles of natural philosophy extracted from the divine revelation* (London, 1753)

[448] G. Cantor, *Michael Faraday: Sandemanian and Scientist: A Study of Science and Religion in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991): p. 37.

- *A Compendious Hebrew Lexicon, adapted to the English Language, and Composed upon a New, Commodious Plan, etc.* (London, 1766)
- *The Mosaic Theory of the Solar and Planetary System* (London, 1766)

William Romaine (1714–1795): divine, born at Hartlepool on 25 September 1714, the younger son of William Romaine, a French protestant, who came to England at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and settled at Hartlepool, where he carried on the trade of a corn dealer. He became a loyal member of the Church of England, and died in 1757. William was sent to the school founded by Bernard Gilpin at Houghton-le-Spring, Durham, and matriculated on 10 April 1731 at Hart Hall (afterwards Hertford College), Oxford. Migrating to Christ Church he graduated B.A. in 1734 and M.A. in 1737. He was ordained priest by Hoadly (1738), probably to the curacy of Banstead, Surrey. At Banstead he became acquainted with Sir Daniel Lambert, who made him his chaplain during his office as lord mayor of London (1741). Romaine dropped his Hutchinsonianism later for Methodism, therefore I included his publications only up to 1753.

- *The Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated from his having made mention … Insisted so Much on the Doctrine of a future state: whereby Mr. Warburton's Attempt to demonstrate the divine legation of Moses from his omission of a future state to be absurd … A sermon [On Mark xii. 24-27] preached before the university of Oxford* (London, 1739)
- *Future Rewards and Punishments proved to be the Sanction of the Mosaic Dispensation. In a second sermon on Mark xii. 24, 25, &c. December 6, 1741* (London, 1742)

- *Jepthah's Vow fulfilled, and his daughter not sacrificed, proved in a sermon* (London, 1744)
- *Hebrew Dictionary and Concordance of F. Marius* (London, 1746)
- *A modest Apology for the citizens and Merchants of London who petitioned the House of Commons against naturalizing the Jews* (London, 1753)

David Aboab: A Venetian Jewish scholar. Aboab was only involved with the Hutchinsonian Controversy with his pamphlet against Sharp in 1751. Aboab was a professor and teacher of the Oriental, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese languages, a Venetian Jew, lately converted from Judaism to Christianity and a Hutchinsonian.[449]

- *A short, plain, and well-grounded introduction to Christianity, with the fundamental maxims of Jesus Christ; and the confession of a true Christian* (London, 1750)
- *Remarks on Dr. Sharp's Two Dissertations* (London, 1751)

John Dove: Dove was a Hutchinsonian, well outside of academic circles.

- *The Importance of Rabbinical Learning: Or the Advantage of understanding the rites, phraseology, &c. of the Talmudists considered; with some remarks on their enigmatical and sublime method of instruction* (London, 1746)
- *A Creed founded on Truth and Common Sense; with Some Strictures on the Origin of Our ideas* (London, 1750)
- *An Essay* (London, 1755)
- *An Essay on Inspiration: Or an Attempt to shew that the pretences of the ancient and the modern Zamzummin to the Ray of Divinity were,*

[449] For more on Aboab and his family, see *Encyclopedia Judaica 2* (Jerusalem, 1971): p. 89.

and are deceptions. Wherein the fundamental principles of Barclay, in his Apology for the Quakers, are refuted etc. (London, 1756)

- *A Dissertation upon the supposed existence of a Moral law of nature, and upon the being of a Triune God ... With a letter to the Bishop of Oxford, and a postscript to the Dunciad, the Critical and Monthly Reviewers* (London, 1757)
- *Remarks upon A Pamphlet written by C. Fleming in a Letter of Admonition to Samuel Pike, entitled, No Protestant Popery. With Some strictures Upon the Remarkables in Mr. Fleming's Scale of First Principles* (London, 1756)
- *A Dissertation upon the supposed existence of a Moral Law of nature, and upon the being of a Triune God. … With a letter to the Bishop of Oxford, and postscript to the Dunciad, the Critical and Monthly Reviewers* (London, 1757)

Andrew Wilson (1718–1792): Philosophical and medical writer, born in 1718, the only son of Gabriel Wilson, parish minister of Maxton in Roxburghshire, by his wife, Rachel Corsan. After studying medicine at the University of Edinburgh, he graduated M.D. on 29 June 1749 with a thesis, 'De Luce,' Edinburgh, 1749. He was licensed to practice by the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh on 7 August 1764, and was admitted a fellow on 6 November of the same year. He exercised his profession at Newcastle and afterwards in London, where he was appointed physician to the medical asylum before 1777. Wilson was a decided Hutchinsonian in his views. Besides medical treatises he published anonymously several philosophical works. He died in London on 4 June 1792.

- *Disquistio Physico Medica inauguralis, de luce etc.* (Edinburgh, 1749)

- *The Creation the Ground Work of Revelation, and Revelation the Language of Nature, or a Brief attempt to demonstrate that the Hebrew Language is founded upon Natural Ideas, and that the Hebrew Writings transfer them to Spiritual Objects'* (Edinburgh, 1750)
- *The Principles of Natural Philosophy* (London, 1754)
- *Human Nature surveyed by Philosophy and Revelation* (London, 1758)
- *Short Observations on the Principles and Moving Powers Assumed by the Present System of Philosoph* (London, 1764)
- *Reflection upon Some of the Subjects in Dispute between the Author of the 'Divine Legation' and a late Professor in the University of Oxford* (London, 1766)

Walter Hodges: provost of Oriel College, Oxford. Walter Hodges was the teacher of both William Jones of Nayland and George Horne. Hodges is one of the first Oxford sympathizers of Hutchinson.

- *Miscellaneous Reflections with Remarks on the Historical Account of the Life of King David* (London, 1745)
- *Elihu, or and Enquiry into the Principal Scope and Design of the Book of Job* (London, 1750)
- *The Christian Plan, exhibited in the interpretation of Elohim: with Observations upon a few other matters and expressions relative to the same subject* (Oxford, 1752). There is also an Oxford 1755 edition of this pamphlet.
- *Reflections* (Oxford, 1755)
- *Strictures upon some Passages in Dr. Sharp's Cherubim … by the author of Elihu* (London, 1756)

George Watson (1723–1773): of Oxford, who was mentioned by William Jones as the mentor of both himself and George Horne.[450] Divine, born in 1723 or 1724, was the son of Humphrey Watson of London. He matriculated from University College, Oxford, on 14 March 1739/40, graduating B.A. in 1743 and M.A. in 1746. While at University College he was the tutor and friend of George Horne, afterwards Bishop of Norwich. He held the theological opinions of Hutchinson, to which he introduced Jones and Horne. Watson died on 16 April 1773.

- *Christ the Light of the World, A Sermon before the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1750)
- *A Seasonable admonition to the Church of England. A Sermon (on Jude 5), etc.* (Oxford, 1755)
- *The Doctrine of the Ever-Blessed Trinity proved in a discourse on the eighteenth chapter of Genesis* (London, 1756.)

Charles Peters (1690–1774): Hebrew scholar. Although he was not known as a follower, Hutchinson mentioned him as an acquaintance with whom he studied Hebrew.[451] Peters's knowledge of Hebrew was famous and he was once called 'the first Hebrew Scholar in Europe'.[452] His interaction with Hutchinsonians is not clear, although both Hutchinson and Bate frequently mentioned him in the Catcott Correspondence. J. C. D. Clark in his latest work on Samuel Johnson mentioned a manuscript source which suggested

[450] William Jones, *Memoirs of the Life, Studies and Writings of George Horne* (London, 1795): p. 26.
[451] John Hutchinson to A. S. Catcott, 19 April 1735. Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence, B26063: f. 11.
[452] Richard Polwhele, *Biographical Sketches in Cornwall* (London, 1831): p. 72.

that during the 1720s and 1730s Peters had a reputation of being 'a great disciple of John Hutchinson.'[453]

- *A critical dissertation of the Book of Job* (London, 1751)
- *An Appendix to the critical dissertation on Job, giving a further account of the Book of Ecclesiastes* (London, 1760)

George Horne (1730–1792): bishop of Norwich, born at Otham, near Maidstone, on 1 November 1730, son of Samuel Horne, rector of the parish; his mother was the daughter of Bowyer Handley. He received his early education from his father, and was then sent for two years to Maidstone school. In his sixteenth year he won 'a Maidstone scholarship' at University College, Oxford, matriculating 17 march 1745/6. During his undergraduate course he became acquainted with William Jones, his future chaplain and biographer. He graduated B.A. in October 1749, and was elected to a Kentish fellowship at Magdalen College in 1750. Here he passed the greater part of his life; he graduated M.A. in 1752, and was ordained by the Bishop of Oxford in 1753; he was junior proctor in 1758; and in 1768 he was elected president of Magdalen. From 1771 to 1781 he was chaplain in ordinary to the king. In 1776 he became vice-chancellor of the university. In June 1790, he accepted the bishopric of Norwich. He died at Bath on 17 January 1792.

- *The Theology and Philosophy in Cicero's Somnium … Explained, or, an attempt to demonstrate that the Newtonian system is perfectly agreeable to the notions of the wisest ancients* (London, 1751)

[453] J. C. D. Clark and Erskine Hill, *Samuel Johnson in Historical Context.* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001): p. 47. The related manuscript mentioned in the book is of a Scottish Non-juring bishop, Archibald Campbell: Bodleian Ms. Eng. Th. c. 33, f. 403-4.

- *A Fair, Candid and Impartial state of the Case between Newton and Mr. Hutchinson. In which is shown, how far a system of physics is capable of mathematical demonstration; how far Sir Isaac's … has that demonstration, etc.* (Oxford, 1753). Second edition appeared in 1799.
- *Sermons* (London, 1756)
- *An Apology for certain gentlemen in the University of Oxford, aspersed in a late anonymous pamphlet entitled 'A Word to the Hutchinsonians'* (Oxford, 1756). Second edition appeared in 1799.
- *The Almighty glorified in judgement. A Sermon preached on occasion of the late earthquakes and public fast* (Oxford, 1756)
- *A View of Mr. Kennicott's method of correcting the Hebrew text, with three queries … thereupon, etc.* (London, 1760)
- *Works wrought through faith a condition of our Justification* (Oxford, 1761)
- *A Sermon [on Sam.v.3] preached before the Sons of the Clergy* (London, 1762)
- *Letters on Infidelity* (London, 1784). 1786, 1806 and 1819 editions appeared as well.
- *The Character of True Wisdom, and the means of attaining it: A Sermon preached before the Society of Gentlemen educated in the King's School … Aug. 26. 1784 etc.* (Oxford, 1784)
- *A letter to the Rev. Dr. Priestley* (London, 1787)
- *Charge intended to have been delivered to the Clergy of Norwich etc.* (Norwich, 1791). 1792 edition appeared as well.
- *Small Pieces from the posthumous papers of the late Bishop Horne, The Scholar Armed, vol.2* (London, 1795)
- *The Trinity in Unity.* A Discourse, SPCK, Religious Tracts, vol.3, (London, 1800). A new edition of the article appeared in 1836, SPCK, vol 2. Same article appeared in Bristol – Church of England Tract Society. The Publications of the Church of England Society, Vol. 3, 1824

- *Aphorisms and Opions of Dr. G. H. With notes and a Biographical Sketch* (London, 1857)
- *Cautions to the Readers of Mr. Law and Letter to a Lady on Jacob Behmen's writings in the Works of the Late Right Reverend George Horne, D.D. Lord Bishop of Norwich, 4 vols.* (London: Longman, Rees, and Co., 1831)

William Jones (1726–1800): born at Lowick in Northamptonshire 30 July 1726. On 9 July 1745 he matriculated at University College, Oxford, with a Charterhouse exhibition. He there became acquainted with his lifelong friend, George Horne, afterwards bishop of Norwich. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Peterborough, and in 1751 priest by the Bishop of Lincoln. His first curacy was at Finedon in Northamptonshire. In 1754 he married Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. Nathaniel Bridges. He died 6 January 1800. His writings were collected in twelve volumes, with a short 'Life' of the author, by William Stevens, in 1801. Jones was a close friend of Horne and Catcott Junior.

- *A Full Answer to the Essay on Spirit* (London, 1753)
- *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy: wherein the use of natural means, or second causes, in the economy of the material world, is demonstrated from reason* (Oxford, 1762)
- *Zoologia Ethica: A Disquisition concerning the Mosaic Distinction of Animals into clean and unclean* (London, 1771)
- *Physiological Disquisitions, or Discourses on the Natural Philosophy of the Elements* (London, 1781)
- *The Religious Use of Botanical Philosophy* (London, 1786)
- *Natural History of the Earth and its Minerals* (London, 1787)
- *Considerations on the Nature and Economy of Beasts and Cattle* (London, 1785)

- *The Religious Use of Botanical Philosophy* (London, 1786)
- *Considerations in Natural History of the Earth and its Minerals* (London, 1787)
- *A letter to John Bull, Esq. from his second cousin Thomas Bull* (London, 1792)
- *The Book of Nature, or the True Sense of things explained and made easy to the capacities of children* (London 1792)
- *The Grand Analogy; or the Testimony of Nature and Heathen Antiquity to the Truth of a Trinity in Unity* (London, 1793)
- *The Churchman's Catechism* (London, 1794)
- *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of the time … A Collection of the Tracts on the principles and evidences of Christianity, the constitution of the Church, and the Authority of civil government* (London, 1795)
- *Memoirs of the Life, Studies, and Writings of the Right Reverend George Horne, D.D. Late Bishop of Norwich* (London, 1795)
- *A Letter to the Church of England* (London, 1798)
- *A New Preface to the Second Edition of Memoirs of the Life, Studies, Writings, &c. Of the Right Rev. George Horne* (London, 1799)

Robert Spearman (1703–1761): theologian, born in 1703, eldest son of Robert Spearman, attorney of the city of Durham, by his wife Hannah, only daughter of William Webster, merchant, of Stockton–on-Tees, Durham, resided at Oldacres, Sedgefield, in that county, and amused his leisure with rambling speculations in theology. A pupil of John Hutchinson (1674–1737), he survived him, edited his works, and wrote his life. He died on 20 October 1761. Spearman knew not only the early followers of Hutchinson, but was also acquainted with the later ones. When he died, William Jones stated that he was expecting Spearman to comment on the draft of his *Essay on the First*

Principles of Natural Philosophy (1762): 'Mr. Spearman's death was a sudden and great disappointment to me, as I had a copy transcribed chiefly for his use.'[454]

- *An Enquiry Concerning Philosophy and Theology; Tending to show, when and whence mankind came at the knowledge of these two important points* (Edinburgh, 1755)
- *Letters to A Friend Concerning the Septuagint Translation and the Heathen Mythology* (Edinburgh, 1759/60). There is also a Dublin edition.
- Entry for John Hutchinson in *Flloyds Bibliotheca Biographica* (London, 1760)
- *A Supplement to the Works of John Hutchinson … being an idex and explanation of all Hebrew Words cited in the second part of his Moses's Principia. With additional Remarks, by … R. Spearman…To this work is prefixed, Mr. Hutchinson's life, written by Mr. Spearman* [edited by J. P.] (London, 1765)

Alexander Catcott (1725–1779): divine and geologist, eldest son of the Rev. Alexander Stopford Catcott, master of the grammar school of Bristol, born at Bristol on 2 November 1725. He was educated at the grammar school; entered Winchester in 1739, and Wadham College, Oxford, in 1744. He graduated as B.A. in 1748. Catcott died at Bristol 18 June 1779. Catcott knew William Jones, George Horne and William Stevens.

- *Remarks on the Second Part of the Lord Bishop of Clogher's Vindication of the Histories of the Old and New Testament; chiefly,*

[454] William Jones to Alexander Catcott, 23 January 1762. Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence, B26063: f. 56. The pamphlet mentioned, called *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy: wherein the use of natural means, or second causes, in the economy of the material world, is demonstrated from reason*, was published at Oxford the same year.

with respect to his Lordship's interpretation of the Mosaic account of the Creation and Deluge (London, 1756)

- *Treatise on the Deluge* (London, 1761)
- *A Supplement to A Treatise on the Deluge* (Bristol, 1768)

John Parkhurst: Hebrew scholar. His closest allies were George Horne and William Jones. His *Hebrew and English Lexicon* gained him a reputable name not only among Hutchinsonians but among contemporary linguists as well.

- *A serious and friendly address to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley: in relation to a principal doctrine advanced and maintained by him and his assistants* (London, 1753)
- *An Hebrew and English Lexicon without points … to this work is prefixed A Methodical Hebrew Grammar Without points … also the Hebrew Grammar at one view. Ms notes by William Jones* (London, 1762) 1778, 1792, 1799, 1807, 1811, 1813, 1823, 1829, 1821 editions followed.
- *A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament. … To this work is prefixed a plain and easy Greek Grammar, etc.* (London, 1769). 1794 edition followed.
- *The Divinity and Preexistence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, demonstrated from Scripture; in answer to the first section of Dr. Priestley's introduction to his History of early opinions concerning Jesus Christ. Together with strictures on some other parts of that work; and a Postscript, relative to a late publication of Mr. G. Wakefield* (London, 1787)

William Dodd (1729–1777): born 29 May 1729, son of William Dodd, vicar of Bourne in Lincolnshire. He entered Clare Hall, Cambridge, in 1746. On April 1751 he married Mary Perkins. His friends, however, persuaded him to return the money received from a manager and to resume a clerical career.

He was ordained deacon on 19 October 1751, and became curate at West Ham, Essex. He was appointed lectureship at West Ham in 1752, and to a lectureship at St. James's, Garlickhythe. Around this time he became acquainted with 'Hutchinsonians' including George Horne and John Parkhurst.

- *A conference between a Mystic, and Hutchinsonian, a Calvinist, a Methodist, a Member of the Church of England and others, wherein the tenets of each are freely examined and discussed* (London, 1761)

Fowler Comings: there is no available information on Comings.

- *The Printed Hebrew Text of the Old Testament Vindicated. An Answer to Mr. Kennicott's Dissertation in two parts* (Oxford, 1753)
- *Sermons on Various Subjects and Occasions* (London, 1790)

George Fenwicke (1690–1760): divine, born in 1690, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, of which he was elected a fellow, 29 March 1710. He resigned his fellowship in March 1722, and was presented to the rectory of Hallaton, Leicestershire, which he held until his death in 1760, a period of thirty-eight years. In Darling's *Cyclopaedia Bibliographia* Fenwicke is styled 'a Hutchinsonian divine'.

- *Thoughts on Hebrew Titles of the Psalms* (London, 1749)
- *The Psalter in its original form* (London, 1759)

John Lookup: theologian, was a disciple of John Hutchinson.

- *The Erroneous translations in the vulgar versions of the scriptures detected in several instances taken from the original. With a previous Essay upon the doctrine of Trinity* (London 1739)

William Gardner: Gardner was the husband of Hutchinson's niece, attempted to contact both A. S. Catcott and Forbes for the purpose of gaining their consent and help in publishing Hutchinson's works after his death. Gardner tried to convince Catcott that Bate and Spearman were by no means 'judges of the value and vast importance of what he [Hutchinson] has left as well as what is published'.[455] But Gardner was not successful in his efforts, and Spearman and Bate began the preparation of Hutchinson's edited works.

- *The Faithful Pastor. A Sermon preached before the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1745)

Henry Stebbing: Archdeacon of Wiltshire.

- *An Examination of Mr. Warburton's Second Proposition in his projected Demonstration of the Divine Legation of Moses* (London, 1744)
- *The History of Abraham justified against the objections of the author of Divine Legation of Moses; to which is added, A State of argument concerning the knowledge of the doctrine of the future state among the ancient Jews etc.* (London, 1746)

James Moody: Hutchinsonian, no other information available.

- *The Evidence of Christianty, contained in the words Aleim and Berith, defended. Being an answer to Dr. Sharp's two dissertations concerning the etymology and the scripture meaning of those words* (London, 1752)

[455] William Gardner to Catcott, 30 August 1737, Bristol Reference Library. Catcott Correspondence, B26063: f. 26. Gardner also published a Hutchinsonian pamphlet in 1745. See Appendix.

Henry Lee: Hutchinsonian, no other information available.

- *An Examination of the Consequences of Dr. Middleton's … Inquiry. Some observations in order to confute what he has objected to the Lord Bishop of London Disourses on the use and intent of Prophecy* (London, 1750)
- *The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement &c, vindicated from the misinterpretations of Mr. John Taylor Norwich* (London, 1752)
- *Sophron: Or, Nature's Characteristics of the Truth, in a Course of meditations on the scenes of Nature* (London, 1758)

William Stevens (1732-1807): biographer and editor of the works of William Jones. Stevens was born in the parish St. Savior's, Southwark, on 2 March 1732. He was educated at Maidstone with his cousin, George Horne. Stevens devoted his time to literary studies, and had a good knowledge of Hebrew, French and classics. His chief study was theology. He kept up a constant correspondence with Horne. Stevens identified himself with that group of churchmen who acknowledged William Jones as their leader. He joined with Jones in forming a 'Society for the Reformation of Principles', to counteract the influence of French Revolution. Stevens's last publication was his edition of Jones's works published in 1801. Stevens died on 7 February 1807.

- *Essay on the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Church* (London, 1773)
- *A Discourse on the English Constitution* (London, 1776)
- *Strictures on a Sermon entitled 'The Principles of Revolution Vindicated by Richard Watson* (Cambridge, 1777)

- *The Theological, Philosophical and Miscellaneous Works of The Rev. William Jones in Twelve Volumes to Which is prefixed a Short Account of His Life and Writings* (London, 1801)

John Skinner (1744–1816): bishop of Aberdeen, second son of John Skinner (1721–1807) who himself was a Hutchinsonian too.

- *A Course of Lectures* (Aberdeen, 1786)
- *A Layman's account of his Faith* (Edinburgh, 1801)
- *Primitive Truth and Order Vindicated* (Aberdeen, 1803)

William Van Mildert (1765-1836): bishop of Durham, Van Mildert was born in London on 6 November 1765. From 1779 to 1784 he was sent to Merchant Taylor's school. He matriculated from Queen's College, Oxford on 21 February 1784. Van Mildert was appointed to Lady Moyer's lecturer at St. Paul's about 1797, and from 1802 to 1804 he preached the Boyle Lectures.

- *Historical View of the Rise and Progress of Infidelity, with a Refutation of its Principles and Reasonings* (London, 1806)

Biddulph, Thomas Tregenna: David W. Bebbington, in his book on Evangelical movement in Britain, mentions a certain T. T. Biddulph of Bristol as a nineteenth-century Hutchinsonian.[456] Biddulph graduated from Queen's College, Oxford and established the periodical called the *Christian Guardian* in 1798.

[456] David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 57.

Samuel Eyles Pierce: G. Landow mentions Samuel Eyles Pierce as a nineteenth-century Hutchinsonian trying to find Christian messages in the Old Testament.[457]

[457] George Landow, *Victorian Types, Victorian Shadows: Biblical Typology in Victorian Literature, Art, and Thought* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), p. 21.

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Bate, Julius. *A Reply to Dr. Sharp's Review and Defence of his Dissertations on the Scripture Meaning of Aleim and Berith.* London, 1755.

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